

WHY A DANE FINDS ENGLISH LAND A GOOD BARGAIN.  
GERMAN PRISONERS IN FRANCE. By André Aron.

# COUNTRY LIFE

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# COUNTRY LIFE

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E. O. HOPPE

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# COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN  
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## A Weakness in English Agriculture

A CAREFUL study of Continental methods of agriculture, particularly those employed in countries like Germany, France, Holland, Belgium and Denmark, brings out the vast difference in principle between modern and ancient methods. As is said in the course of an article which appears on another page, the earliest pastoral tribes were found to seek out the places where Nature provided food for their flocks and herds. All that is very familiar to us, because it happens that the Bible is full of allusions to this habit of moving in tents in search of well watered and otherwise suitable lands. The soil, therefore, may be said to have dictated to the shepherd where he should go. Later, when spade husbandry came into being and was followed by the plough,

the simple cultivators had still to follow where Nature led the way. They learned that such and such a soil was most suitable for a good crop, and before land came to be understood it continued to dictate to those who tilled it. The tradition has lingered in Great Britain longer than in any part of the Continent of Europe, and it has been accentuated by the history of agriculture during the last thirty or forty years. In war time only was it neglected. In the days of a threatened invasion on the part of Napoleon, when food was very scarce and very dear in this country, the farmer learned to attack many parts of the country that he had previously thought most unpromising. Tennyson recalls in one of his poems how the old North Country farmer of Lincolnshire stubbed up the gorse on the wold and drained the mere, turning what had previously been waste into good land. He did it with infinite trouble, but the marks of his plough-share long remained to tell of the energy with which the farmer struggled against difficulties in those hard and dreadful days.

The opposite movement took place when during the last twenty years of last century our markets were flooded with the cheapest food, and agriculture ceased to be a remunerative calling. The farmer began to neglect or altogether abandon those difficult places which at the best yielded only inferior crops. There was no county in England in which some land was not left derelict at the beginning of the present century and, year by year, while other countries were adding to the cultivated area, we let the waste increase, and to-day the tradition is stronger than ever that you can only get food crops where the circumstances have been rendered favourable by Nature. We saw this proved in the official *communiqué* informing the world that certain Crown lands in Yorkshire had been allocated to small holdings for the Soldiers' Settlement Scheme. It was said that good land alone could yield adequate returns to the small-holder. In point of fact this was the mere echo of an exploited tradition.

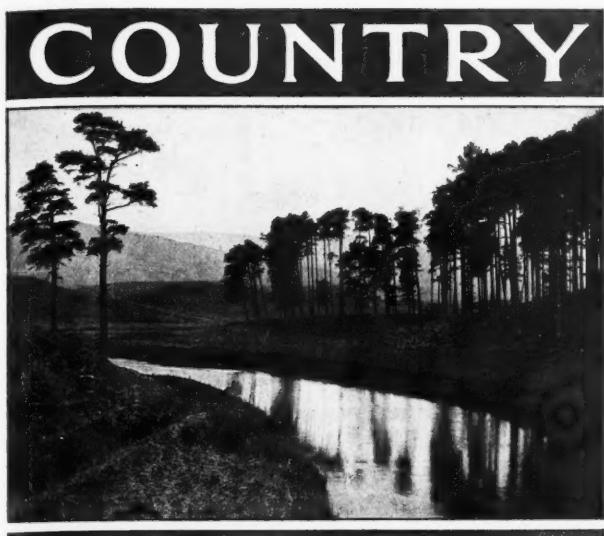
We have had abundant evidence of recent years to show that science rejoices when it has to grapple with what was once thought a forbidding area. Dr. Russell reported that the land on which Dr. Edwards is experimenting in East Anglia is the worst he ever analysed. Yet farmers in that neighbourhood admit that there were no finer crops near than those produced on it during the course of the present twelve months. Professor Somerville in Poverty Bottom found land that had been left derelict because the farmer thought it could not be cultivated to yield a profit. In point of fact it had spelt ruin. We know of a farmer who before that land was purchased sat for a whole afternoon smoking and considering whether he could make a paying proposition of it or not. But tradition was too strong, and though the price was ridiculously low, he conquered the temptation to buy. Nevertheless, scientific agriculture prevailed, and to-day the ground is yielding at least four times the amount of foodstuff that it did three or four years ago. What was accomplished in these cases is evidently being repeated by the Danes in Berkshire. Here, again, science is showing its mastery over difficulties. It rejoices in the fight with them, and the omen is a good omen. In these facts may be discerned the hope and promise of a greater agricultural prosperity in this country than has ever been known before.

It would mean also greater security. We do not say absolute security, because the data are not in existence by which the possible and profitable increase of food can be correctly estimated. We know neither the acreage nor the capacity of the land that is only partly cultivated. We are in complete ignorance as to the potentialities of the waste. Our statesmen have accumulated figures and facts that have no bearing on anything in particular, but there has been an utter neglect of the duty of ascertaining what the resources of the country in this connection amount to. The period must come to an end now, because it is vital to the very existence of the British Empire that the possibilities of the land must be not only known, but developed to the highest capacity.

## Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of Prince George of Battenberg and his bride, formerly Countess Nadeja de Torby, whose marriage took place on the 15th inst.

\* It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



## • NOTES •

**A** NUMBER of extremely interesting questions are raised by the presence on the Berkshire Downs of a Danish farmer who is turning what have generally been regarded as barren wastes into fruitful soil. There is nothing precisely new in the phenomena. A considerable number of Danes have come to England for reasons that the English farmer would do well to attend to. The chief is that they get nearer the great market, which is London. But our farmers have been at London's elbow all the time, so that this incursion of Danes for the sake of an advantage which they have overlooked or underestimated is itself in the nature of a surprise. It is not only London that is in question, but all the great towns. England is a land of huge industrial cities and what is true of the Metropolis is true in a greater or lesser degree of Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Newcastle, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dundee, Aberdeen; in fact, of all the provincial towns. Every pound of Danish butter sold in any of them has to be transmitted several hundred miles from its place of origin.

ANOTHER advantage is even more significant. Mr. Mygdal, the Dane in question, told Earl Grey that one of the reasons that induced him to buy land in England was its cheapness. He says the price of agricultural land in Denmark averages about £80 an acre, and hints that he paid about a quarter of that for his Berkshire farm. Now, what this means is that those connected with land in this country have not recovered confidence after the severe experience they had of low prices in the years of the great depression. Up to the eighties £80 an acre was not considered a high price for agricultural land in Great Britain. Mr. William Dennis, in the reminiscent anecdotal article which we published about him some months ago, told of his first purchase of seven acres of land at about £100 an acre. Similar land would fetch about £40 to-day, or would have done till the war started—some extraordinary prices have been realised during the present year. Potato land, in one instance at least, changed hands at something well over £200 an acre. But in normal times, that is to say, when there was no war and before depression set in, from £80 to £100 an acre was an ordinary price to pay for first quality agricultural land.

UNDOUBTEDLY land is in the way of going up to something like this price. It takes a little time for things to regulate themselves, but it is obvious that the movement can only follow one direction in the end. It all depends upon the aptitude and cleverness with which those engaged in the industry recognise its new possibilities. Nothing is more worthy of note in regard to the Danish installation than the fact that the management is placed in the hands of a man saturated with modern agricultural science. It leads to an enlarged expenditure in two directions, namely, labour and manure. Absolute cleanliness is a requisite for the highest crops, and Mr. Cleghorn points out that this is not only maintained by the engagement of a larger staff than is common on the farm, but by the weed smothering quality of the heavy cereal crops grown.

IN another part of the paper this week there is an article by M. André Aron on the employment of German prisoners on French farms, which we are sure everybody will read with the keenest interest. It ends with a sentence in which the amusing is pleasantly mingled with the wise. "In this way," says M. Aron, "the sturdy German, who hitherto has been accustomed to scratching the unkindly clods of his Fatherland for the benefit of his Junker lord, is now helping our peasants to cultivate the fruitful soil of the France he came to conquer." How such a satisfactory result has been achieved is shown in the clearest manner by our contributor, who has taken a leading share in doing the necessary organisation for this work. It began very early, for the thrifty and provident French were quick to see how advantageously the Boche could be employed in doing work which had previously been accomplished by the soldiers. On the whole, Fritz showed himself a docile and easily managed servant. Escape in France could not be very difficult, since the frontier is a land one, whereas in our country he who attempted to get away would have to find means of crossing the sea. But the German prisoner gives very little trouble in this respect.

AT first there was some difficulty in getting the prefects of the villages to accept the labour of captives, but very favourable conditions were offered to induce them, and so large schemes of drainage, reclamation and agricultural improvement in Corsica and Brittany were set on foot, each employing about fifty workers. The results were very satisfactory and soon demands for prisoners began to be made to the Central Office of Prisoners of War, and "to-day," says M. Aron, "it may safely be said that there is not a single German prisoner who is not contributing actively towards the maintenance of the country." At first the gangs were composed of fifty prisoners, and that is a very important point for the British to observe. The proposal, we believe, is to send out gangs of one hundred. It is so much more easy to guard them that way. That is one reason why reclamation work is most suitable, especially at this time of the year. Gangs of men would do very little good on a farm in the short, wet days of November, December, January and February, but it would be easy both to employ and guard them at reclamation work. In France the prisoners very soon got accustomed to the conditions and it became possible to send them out in very small groups—at first by twenties, and then by tens, and in some cases a prisoner works by himself. Where that is so they can be very advantageously used to push forward the ordinary work of the farm. It ought to be said that in Germany prisoners, especially Belgian and English prisoners, are very largely set to work on the waste.

### BUGLES.

Bugles on the wind, across the commons—  
Bugles shrill and sweet,  
Bugles o'er the hills and in the woodlands—  
Bugles down the street.

Bugles ringing over harbour waters,  
Plainly and clear;  
These are the bugles that I long for  
That I cannot hear.

Flute-like, they float across the water  
Elusive and pale,  
Echo takes a note and flings it sea-ward—  
A faerie hail.

Bugles through the storm across the foam tops,  
Blown about like spray,  
Challenge upon challenge through the storm wrack  
To a world grown grey.

M. G. MEUGENS.

LORD CRAWFORD'S manly exhortation to the Norfolk farmers was well timed and well placed. Norfolk is a county of light soils, the chief advantage of which is that men can work them under almost any conditions without doing any harm. It is far otherwise on the heavy clays. "Plough a clay land when it is very wet," said an experienced farmer the other afternoon, "and it will sulk for five years after." He quoted the saying as having come from the Midlands, but a farmer from Hertfordshire promptly endorsed the view and said that in one case he had ruined his land for three seasons by "doing it wet." A third very successful farmer-owner told how he had been attempting to sow his

wheat, but that he did so in such a state of mud that his horses—and he keeps exceedingly good, strong horses—were completely tired with half a day's work, nor did he look forward to any prospect of an adequate return. The first requirement for a fine crop is a fine tilth. But there are many districts and many farms in Norfolk and Suffolk where the farmer can go on his land in practically any kind of weather without doing the slightest damage, and these are the places where work may be pushed forward with advantage.

AT another moment the curious turn which the Presidential election took in America would have called forth a great deal of amusing comment, but everything at present is weighed in the scales of war, and the question is what effect the re-election of President Wilson is likely to have on the great conflict. When it was wrongly announced that Mr. Hughes was the victor, a yell of delight came from certain German throats, and it was openly said that means would be taken to render the end of President Wilson's tenure of office "frightful." But when the apparent decision was reversed, so was the German note. Any aversion to President Wilson was suppressed in the public prints and a rather faint-hearted endeavour made to show that his election in some inscrutable way was a victory for the Fatherland. The most profound remark, however, was made by one of the German papers, which said that, when all was said and done, President Wilson will remain President Wilson.

A VERY striking description of a great air fight has been sent from British headquarters by Mr. Percival Phillips. The scene really needed a Homer to do justice to it, but Mr. Phillips has made a splendid attempt. The difficulty lies in obtaining particulars. This fight began when the aviators were 5,000ft. up. It was impossible for the participants to describe what they were doing. The aviation fight has developed into a singular mixture of extraordinary flying and savage attack. At first two rival aeroplanes simply shot at each other with machine guns. Nowadays they charge one another like aerial coursers. In Mr. Phillips' words each contest was a "furious duel, fought at a dizzy speed, as the opposing planes swirled and eddied through the clouds, intent on each other's destruction." No mediæval imagination could possibly have pictured such a battle. It bears some remote resemblance to a charge of cavalry, with the air instead of the hard ground in which to act, marvellous machines replacing the prancing steeds, and instead of the "gambades" of a horse, the quick manoeuvring of the deadly air vessel.

VERY considerable regret will be felt that the Government has been obliged to take over the Royal Horticultural Hall, Vincent Square, for the exhibitions there have presented a rare combination of beauty and usefulness. Very few classes of people have exerted themselves more for the public good during the war than the Royal Horticultural Society. Its Secretary, the Rev. W. Wilks, at a very early stage set the example of devoting a large proportion of his garden to the cultivation of vegetables and other food products. That was the least of the services rendered by those whose example is likely to be followed. The Royal Horticultural Society from time to time has issued simple and excellently chosen directions for cultivating different plants useful in the kitchen. Several of these leaflets are models of what such things should be. Many an amateur has written for the one on pruning fruit trees. This is a marvel of clearness and fulness of directions, given with perfect simplicity and in a very small space.

THE *Times*, like other journals, is feeling the scarcity and dearness of raw material. Journalists of our time have had no experience of such dearness in paper as prevails at the present moment. Add to that an increase in other expenses, and it will easily be understood why the *Times* is making a slight addition to its cost. The statement in the journal itself that £1,000 a week has been lost in circulation must surprise those who are not very sympathetic with the difficulties that journalism has to labour under at the present time. It is worthy of note that in all its changes of price the *Times* never before was published at such an odd sum as 1½d. Its price originally was 4½d., then it was raised to 6d. in 1799, and another ½d. added ten years afterwards. In September, 1815, the price was 7d. and that went on till 1836, when it was reduced to 5d. The price fell 1d. at a time in 1855, 1861, 1913, and on March 16th, 1914, when it reached 1d. It will be interesting to notice what the effect is of charging an additional ½d.

SIR DOUGLAS HAIG has sent another of his impressive wordless messages to Berlin. For some time past the Germans have been talking of the admission of their victory as a preliminary to peace, and they have been comforted by Major Moraht and other military experts saying that the British are now up against a line as strong as Gibraltar. Sir Douglas Haig in his despatch on Monday described the defences which he captured as being of "an exceptionally strong nature." The village of Beaumont-Hamel was considered by the Germans to be impregnable. It and St. Pierre Divion were carried with such impetuosity by our indomitable troops that the enemy in retiring had to leave behind more than 5,000 prisoners. It will not be easily possible even for the servile official Press of Germany to make light of this magnificent feat. It has been compared to Wellington's capture of the lines of Badajos, and the comparison is perfectly good. We are apt to think of these villages as something like our own hamlets, but those who have been at the front realise the scientific knowledge and ingenuity which have been employed to make them the very strongest types of the modern military fortress.

#### THOMAS OF LONDON.

"Me que peperi ne cesses, Thoma, tueri!"

(Inscription on the 13th century common seal of London, commanding the City to the care of Thomas à Becket.)

Tom of London, be thou known  
Thus before the Judgment-throne ;  
London's Thomas, Thomas merry,  
Not pale Tom o' Canterbury !

Rather our tall citizen  
Loved by many better men,  
Than the prelate gaunt and grim  
Striding through the cloister dim.

Thomas, London gave thee birth,  
Gave thee from her ancient earth  
Roman nose and Norman hair,  
And Celtic charm in prank or prayer.

Thou wert hers, the best of thee,  
Crimson-clad and sorrow-free,  
Hawk on wrist and gem in ear,  
Wine in mouth and glove on spear.  
Render her that love again,  
Thou whose robe the dark drops stain,  
Whose clay the Kentish monks did keep  
In a golden ark of sleep ;

When the foeman wins the wall,  
When the flaming arrows fall,  
When the hidden traitors stir,  
Thy London, then remember her !

Remember her, thou who of old  
Didst guard her bridge with hand upheld :  
Tom of London, be thou still  
The warden of her towered hill !

And be her foeman imaged in  
That flagellated Angevin  
Whom thy dead hand held very fast  
And bowed unto the dust at last.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

WE in Great Britain have felt the scarcity of food during the war less than any of the other belligerent countries, enemy or ally, but that is no reason why we should not look to the immediate future. The time for economy is past when the pinch has actually come. There is no doubt that much good could be effected by a wise frugality at the present moment. Take the potato as an example. Mr McKenna has recommended that it should not be used as a vegetable twice in a day. He ought to go further and ask the whole community to abstain from buying or eating potatoes for a month. The result would probably be surprising to a great many people, because there is every reason to believe that there are sufficient potatoes in this country to see us right into the next spring crop, and the high price is largely due to that speculation which has so frequently been associated with the most commonly used root in the English field or garden. Let the consumption of potatoes be banned entirely for four weeks and the price would come down with a run.

ANOTHER suggested economy is the disuse of white bread. We presume that this would involve the abolition of cakes and confections. For one thing, the scarcity of sugar

is more felt at the present moment than that of any other article, yet enormous quantities are being used for the purpose of making rich cakes, and still more enormous quantities are made up into sweetmeats. Nevertheless, it is nonsense to concentrate attention on the great confectionery shops in London. There is just as much waste of sugar going on among the munition workers and the children and wives of men at the front. In the village shop there never was before so much activity in the sweetmeat business. Yet the very people who encourage their children to spend what pocket-money they have in this way are at their wits' end to obtain an adequate supply of sugar for household use. Nor can it be argued that the sort of sweetmeat sold in a village shop is calculated to satisfy in a wholesome way the natural craving of children for sugar. If it comes to that, they would be better to have it in a cake.

**M**EAT is another object which calls for frugality. In point of fact, nearly everybody consumes, even in these times, more meat than is necessary or even advantageous to health. Very much can be said for the institution of one meatless day a week and still more for moderation in the consumption during the other days of the week. Children of tender years are better without meat at all, and the

majority of men and women would gain rather than suffer in health if they confined the use of butcher's meat to one meal in the day. It may be remembered how a few years ago, when meat rose to a very extravagant price in the United States, a league of abstainers from meat was formed and grew to such strength that it had a very appreciable effect on the consumption, and the prices were lowered. A combination of the same kind in this country would probably bring about the same result and lead to greater economy in this essential of housekeeping.

**A**N excellent choice has been made by the Government in appointing Sir Howard Frank honorary chief adviser to the amalgamated branch of the War Office and the Ministry of Munitions, which is to be responsible to the Under Secretary of State for War. The business of the new body will be to deal with land held by the two offices referred to, including negotiations for purchase. There is no need to dwell on the very special qualifications of Sir Howard Frank for this work; there is probably nobody in England who is more thoroughly versed in all matters relating to the value of land and property pertaining to it. His position as honorary adviser will allow him to give full scope to his independence of mind and judgment.

## WHY A DANE FINDS ENGLISH LAND A GOOD BARGAIN

### CHEAPER, MORE FERTILE, NEARER THE MARKETS

**O**UR readers may remember certain references to Danish farming on the Berkshire Downs which from time to time have appeared in our pages. A slightly fuller explanation may now be given. At one time it was contemplated that an illustrated article on Wantage Manor Farm, the one which is now being worked by Danes, should appear in *COUNTRY LIFE*, as it could not fail to interest English readers. It was thought of too late in the year for pictures and put off till spring.

Most of our own farmers have given up the Berkshire downland in despair. One of the best known and most important of them, when questioned on the point, averred that his father in the seventies had brought under the plough all the land within his scope that was possible and profitable, and there was nothing left that would repay the cost of reclamation. One felt a little sceptical about this, because the speaker was of the old school of those who reclaimed land by dint of hard ploughing and plenty of farmyard manure. Later on, when it was announced that Denmark had stopped the exportation of grass and clover seeds, owing to the shortage of the crops this year, commenting on a very interesting letter from Messrs. Sutton and Sons that appeared in the *Times*, we suggested they might utilise the downs for the production of seed. The suggestion was received with the courtesy and thoughtfulness characteristic of this great firm, but the answer delivered, after careful deliberation and at considerable length, amounted to a *non possumus*. In the course of this letter, which we cannot quote in full, the essential point was explained to be that each kind of seed requires a soil and climate suited to itself. Generally speaking, remunerative crops of seed can only be grown on fairly rich soil. Without sufficient moisture to mature the plants or sufficient sunshine to ripen the seeds, any soil would, of course, be useless. Thus the thin poor soils on the chalk downs of Berkshire are not fitted for seed crops generally.

By a curious coincidence there arrived almost with the same post as this communication a copy from Earl Grey of a confidential report on the Wantage Manor Farm by James Cleghorn, with notes by the Hon. Edward G. Strutt, Christopher Turnor and A. D. Hall. It would have been a great pleasure to publish this document in full, but Mr. Mygdal, the owner of the farm, is not agreeable to that being done. His reasons are perfectly sound. Visiting the farm in early August, Mr. Cleghorn had to make estimates of the returns instead of being able to give the exact figures, which, indeed, are not available even now. The owner does not want the account published till estimates have given way to verified facts. One who is experienced in farming can, however, measure a crop with tolerable accuracy, and Mr. Cleghorn is a good observer. His three annotators dot the

i's and cross the t's to good purpose, and altogether this report is most deserving of general attention. To explain its purport it is impossible to do better than give Earl Grey's foreword, which we do with his permission.

"A few words to explain the origin of the following memorandum would appear to be necessary to enable the reader to appreciate its importance.

"Three years ago a Danish friend of mine, Mr. Mygdal, the London Manager of the Danish East Asiatic Company, informed me that he had purchased the Wantage Manor Farm near Wantage at a price which caused him to regard his purchase as an excellent investment. I made enquiries from a local agricultural authority, well acquainted with the Wantage Manor Farm, whether Mr. Mygdal, in his opinion, had made a good purchase. He informed me that the Farm was on the wrong side of the hill, that it was inferior land and that he feared the Danish gentleman would burn his fingers.

"In the Spring of this year I asked Mr. Mygdal whether his two and a half to three years' experience of the Wantage Manor Farm had caused him to modify his original expectations as to the remunerative character of his investment in English land. He informed me that he was so well satisfied with the prospects of a good return on his capital that he was purchasing additional land. He went on to express his opinion that the value of English land as a good business investment did not appear to him to be sufficiently appreciated in this country; pointing out that although in Denmark the land was inferior to land in England, the climate also inferior, the normal rate of wages higher than in the South of England, and the distance from the market (London) further, notwithstanding these four heavy handicaps against the Danish farmer, the average market value of agricultural land in Denmark was about £80 per acre. Consequently the purchase of English land at less than one quarter that amount appeared to him, in view of the advantages attaching to English land, an exceptionally good business investment. If the position *qua* the relative advantages of English and Danish land is correctly stated by Mr. Mygdal, why is the market value of English land so low? This problem should engage the attention of English Capitalists, Bankers, Economists and Landowners.

"Mr. Mygdal having invited me to look over the Wantage Manor Farm I visited it last July and was so impressed by the appearance of the wheat crop, that I asked Mr. Mygdal if he would allow me to bring a party of agricultural experts to visit his farm and to make a report upon it. He assented most gladly, and on August 5th, through the kindness of Lady Wantage, who invited for a week-end to Lockinge,

Lord Crawford and Balcarres (the Minister for Agriculture), Lord Selborne (ex-Minister for Agriculture), the Hon. Edward Strutt, Mr. A. D. Hall and Mr. Christopher Turnor, Mr. Cleghorn of Milfield, Northumberland, and Mr. Mygdal, these gentlemen were enabled to make a personal examination of the crops, buildings, &c., of the Wantage Manor Farm, and to discuss at leisure the Danish methods of cultivation of which Mr. Mygdal's farm is an eloquent and suggestive illustration.

"Mr. Cleghorn was asked to write a memorandum on the Farm. This memorandum was submitted to Messrs. Strutt, Hall and Turnor for their comments. The memorandum and comments upon it are set forth in the following pages, to which I would respectfully call your attention.

"October 21st, 1916.

"GREY."

This is a very interesting story, and the most interesting paragraph in it is that in which Mr. Mygdal gives his opinion of the value of English land as a good business investment. There is a grim irony in his comment that it is not sufficiently appreciated in this country. English agriculture has never been exposed to more incisive criticism than is contained in the remark put forward in the friendliest way, without any desire to find fault. It is a business man giving business reasons. Four heavy handicaps are carried by the Danish farmer: The land is inferior to English land; the climate inferior; the rate of wages higher than in the South of England; and the distance from the market (London) greater. Yet land in Denmark is worth about £80 an acre, and most people would think a fourth of that sum enough to pay for land in downland. As late as this last summer we knew of cultivated land going a-begging for a purchaser, not at a quarter of what it would have been worth in Denmark, but at little more than a twentieth.

Now let us see what was accomplished on the thin poor soil. Mr. Cleghorn draws particular attention to 21 acres of winter oats. The area was lying in grass when Mr. Mygdal bought the farm. It had lain so for twelve years, and originally had not been sown, but just allowed to tumble into the condition which Professor Somerville had to deal with at Poverty Bottom. The soil ranges from about 3 in. to 6 in. in depth and overlies chalk. Mr. Cleghorn, nevertheless, describes the crop of winter oats on this downland as "a crop one would have expected to get only on very good

land." The cereal crops were first-rate. In England a return of four quarters to the acre is generally reckoned to be satisfactory, but on this, by the Danish system of farming, eight quarters were obtained, not only for wheat, but for barley and oats as well. The figure is estimated, of course, but the eyes that looked on were not unaccustomed to appraise the return from a field. On a future occasion, when the returns can be made complete and accurate, we hope to induce Mr. Mygdal to let us publish them. In the meantime it is unnecessary to make any further comment except to ask why, if winter oats can be made to grow on the thin, poor soil of the downs, other seeds should not be made to do equally well. The answer to this question is no personal one. It goes to the very heart of English agriculture. The farmer in this country is far too much governed by the land. He follows the primitive instinct. When man was a nomad and led his flocks from one green spot to another, it was, in a sense, the character of the land that determined where he should lead his charges. Farming is conducted very much on those lines to-day in this country. Such and such land is suitable for potatoes, wheat, mangolds, or any of the other staple crops. But the scientific husbandman no longer looks out from that window. On the contrary, he makes up his mind what the land shall grow, and it is not altogether a paradox to say that the poorer the soil the better it is for his purpose. He can make of it what he likes. That appears at any rate to be the moral deducible from the Danish success on the Berkshire Downs. If the explanation were put in other words it would be found in the description of the manager. Mr. Johannesen has gone through an educative system that must have made him fit for such work as he is now engaged in. After school he had two and a half years in practical farming, two years more at an agricultural college, one at an experimental station. Even with more college and more experimental work, he went to a farm in Germany for a year's experience as a working foreman without pay. That is how a farm manager is made in Denmark; and although it is never the custom of Englishmen to follow exactly in the footsteps of those who go before, it is evident that by methods of our own we must prepare young men of a similar type who will be equipped for the work with all the armour that a knowledge of science can supply.



SUMMER ON THE DOWNS.

***NATIONS, GIVE ANSWER, WHY DO YOU FIGHT?*****BELGIUM—**

At the first blow, I barred the gate  
And my land is ruined and desolate;  
My people are slaves and my treasures are lost  
But I still live on to count the cost—  
I fight to avenge my wrongs.

**FRANCE—**

I fight for liberty and my lands  
My industries lie in enemy hands,  
I gave my manhood before to death  
And I give it again till my dying breath,  
For I have old scores to pay.

**RUSSIA—**

I fight for my frontiers and freedom's cause,  
I hope to redeem old sins and laws,  
A strangled nation I seek to free,  
And to give my land new liberty;  
I fight for my future's soul.

**ENGLAND—**

I have stood for freedom the whole world through  
And I fight for the future's freedom anew,  
My sons are ruling all over the world  
And I fight to keep my flag unfurled  
And to keep it stainless still.

***NATIONS, GIVE ANSWER, HOW DO YOU FIGHT?***

With our faces upward toward the light,  
Cleansed by the blood of our gallant slain  
By our breaking hearts and our bitter pain  
We struggle that right may reign.

M. G. MEUGENS.

**GERMAN PRISONERS IN FRANCE****CAPTURED FRITZ AT WORK IN THE LAND HE WENT TO CONQUER.**

FROM the moment that the order of mobilisation was issued our farms and fields were bereft of all the young men who tilled the soil. Our compulsory service only admits of exemption for physical incapacity, so that France, a country rather agricultural than industrial, which before the war had produced nearly all the grain necessary for her needs, was exposed to scarcity and to the prospect of seeing her fields lie fallow. This danger increased as the war went on. The munition crises obliged us to summon every available artisan and mechanic to the factories, to such an extent, indeed, that the armies which are now fighting at Verdun and on the Somme are chiefly composed of farmers. Those among the English who have visited France since the outbreak of war have told you how we surmounted the difficulty—how women, old men and children have handled the plough, mowed and made the hay with as much energy as those who had gone. But it was with some surprise that they found these workers reinforced by a host of German prisoners. In England it is only near the ports of embarkation or the internment camps that one sees the "field-green" uniforms and ugly flat caps. Here in France they enamel our fields. Sometimes the Boches till the soil in busy little groups under the paternal eye of an old R.A.T., to whom even his kepi and his out-of-date rifle cannot impart a martial air; or sometimes, busy cutting wood, Michael is too well satisfied with his lot to attempt to evade the vigilance of the guard who keeps a look-out over the fields. This happy state of things was not brought about all at once, and we had some difficulty in acclimatising this new species. But it did not take long for the military authorities to feel the need of putting its vast store of imprisoned activity to some practical use, nor for the Minister of Agriculture to see what valuable help could be given to agricultural labour. But the atrocities they had committed in the invaded countries had developed such a hatred of the German in France that the authorities

hesitated to bring the prisoners into contact with our peasantry. Would they not be greeted with stones? Would not their barbarous instinct, aided by the half liberty which they enjoyed, impel them to fresh outrages? Again, what results might be expected from work done against their will by Germans convinced that very shortly they would be set free by their victorious armies? Under the circumstances it was very natural that the Administration had to take the lead, and offer this little sought after labour to the agricultural districts. The prefects accepted some batches of prisoners, and contractors, to whom very favourable conditions were offered to entice them, started large schemes of drainage, reclamation and agricultural improvements in Corsica and Brittany, each employing about fifty workers. The results were highly satisfactory and the behaviour of the prisoners excellent, while the natives showed no hostility towards their now harmless enemies. In a few months, at the beginning of 1915 to be exact, so many demands for prisoners were made to the Central Office of Prisoners of War, that, since the men were also being employed in the docks for loading and such work, there were soon no more left, and the Central Office, which has now become practically the largest employment bureau in France, was obliged to make quite a new organisation. To-day, it may safely be said that there is not a single German prisoner who is not contributing actively towards the maintenance of the country. At first the gangs were composed of fifty prisoners. They were then guarded more easily, but it was soon found necessary to divide them up so as to allow them to do every kind of agricultural work. They were divided into groups of twenty and then into tens, the members of each original group being kept in one locality. One farm is allotted to them, in which they sleep and take their meals; but during the working hours the groups are divided, and it is not uncommon to see a solitary prisoner, one guard being sufficient to keep an eye on four or five meadows or adjacent

farms. The difficulty of getting sufficient guards is the only obstacle to individual labour. In theory these men are prisoners, since the Germans refuse to treat our men on reciprocal terms, but an agreement was made in May, 1915, between the Administrations of War and of Agriculture whereby the control of prisoners employed on the land was placed entirely in the hands of the latter. The organisation allots the available forces to the various regions, but it was considered that the local authorities were better able to gauge the needs of each commune and could utilise them better.

A commission is formed in each department, therefore, consisting of the prefect, a military delegate and a professor of agriculture, and these distribute the gangs between the agricultural syndicates and groups of communes authorised to employ them. Contrary to the method followed in Germany, prisoners are no longer allotted to private employers. It is not desirable that this labour, which is regarded as a national asset, should benefit one farmer or proprietor more than the others. In this way a kind of rotation has been established between the communes, by which each in turn is able to utilise the available gangs.

It would be tedious to examine the various forms of contract drawn up for the employment of the prisoners. The peasants who require one or more labourers apply to the Maire of the Agricultural Syndicate who get them what they want. All they have to do is to pay the wage, which has been fixed at a sufficiently high rate not to depreciate the value of ordinary labour in the locality. This wage is made up as follows: First. Cost of maintenance—repaid to the State and estimated at 1.03fr. per day for food, 0.2fr. for clothing and 0.14fr. for firing and light. Secondly. From 20 to 40 centimes (2d. to 4d.) pocket-money per day for the prisoner. Thirdly. A supplementary charge intended to correspond approximately to the local tax on hand labour. The communes and the syndicates fix the price and ensure the distribution of work.

The guards are not inclined to severity, and when the farmer is willing to make himself responsible for "his" prisoners, the men are practically free. The guard is supplied

from the oldest territorials, the "auxiliaries," and men no longer fit for active service. At present sworn-in civil guards have been instituted, such men as gamekeepers, village constables and private individuals, who, armed with revolvers, look after the prisoners for a salary of 5fr. a day. It would be easy to escape, but it is surprising how rarely the attempt is made. The Huns are not yearning to return to the trenches of the Crown Prince or the Prince of Bavaria, and of the hundreds of thousands we employ not five hundred have tried to cross the frontier, and not a hundred have disappeared. They are quite contented. The country folk treat them just like ordinary farm hands. Even those who have lost son or husband at the front show them no animosity. They often share the morning meal with them, and always give them over and above the agreed wages, food and clothes, and show them many other kindnesses. There has not been a single instance of ill-treatment of prisoners; but, on the contrary, it has often been necessary to insist on more discipline and severity.

Many of the prisoners were farmers—Poles or Silesians accustomed to farming on a large scale, and stock breeding—gardeners, labourers, vineyard workers from the Rhine country, and lumbermen from the Bavarian forests. Not only do we profit by their knowledge, but often they have even been able to show us new ways of doing things. Ordinarily they do the usual work of the farm, ploughing, sowing, haymaking, harvesting, threshing, etc. Those who are not strong or whose habitual occupations have not fitted them for farm life (such as students, clerks, shopkeepers, etc.) do the lighter work, such as looking after the camps, gardening, picking the grapes, wine making, etc. The strongest are converted into gangs of woodmen, who keep up our forests. The less intelligent are put on to agricultural improvement works, of which the benefits will not be felt for a long time yet, such as drainage, dyke building, irrigation canals, road making, etc. In this way the sturdy German, who hitherto has been accustomed to scratching the unkindly clods of his Fatherland for the benefit of his Junker lord, is now helping our peasants to cultivate the fruitful soil of the France he came to conquer.

ANDRÉ ARON.



FRENCH WOODMEN AT WORK.



FOUR-FOOTED LABOURERS IN FRANCE.

E. Fréchet.

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# OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## XIV.—SHREWSBURY

BY CAPTAIN DESMOND COKE.

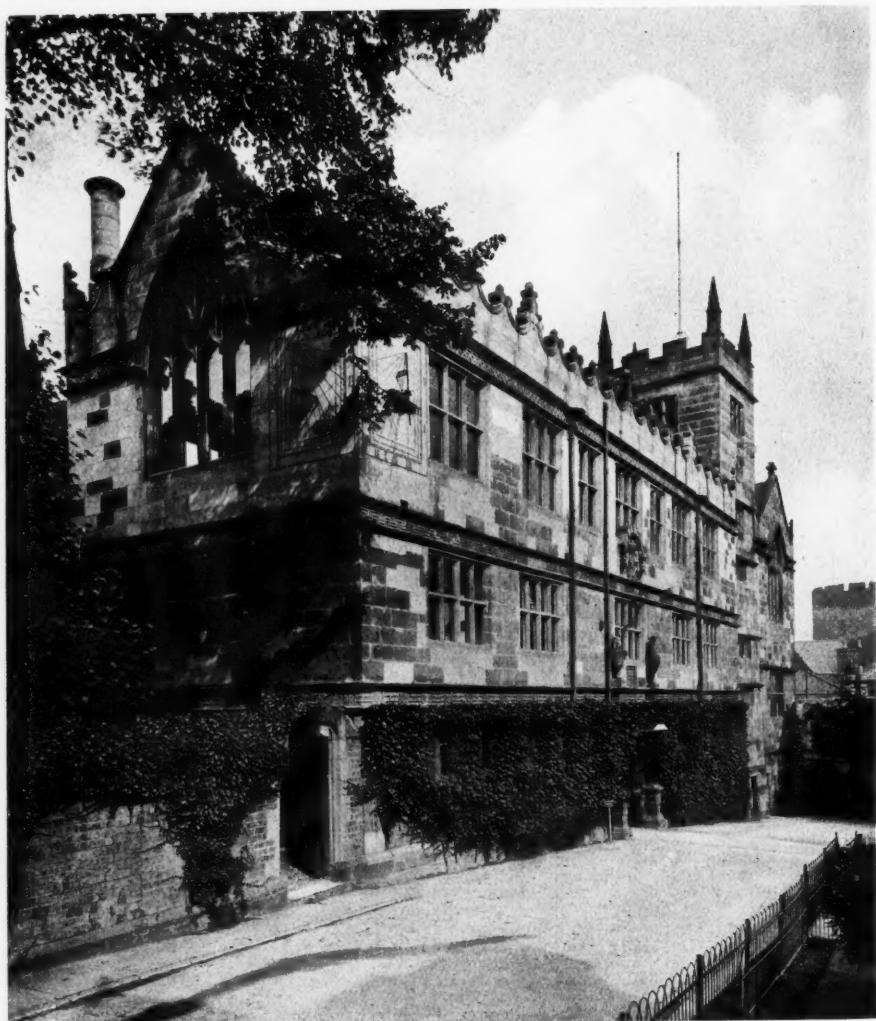
*Author of "The Bending of a Twig: A Shrewsbury Story."*

THE present and the future assume just now such a terrific interest that the past has naturally lost some of its old reverence and glamour. It might, therefore, seem old-fashioned, even almost tedious, to begin an article on Shrewsbury with the typically Speech Day statement that the school was founded under a Charter from King Edward VI in 1551, or that it has reared sons so various as Sir Philip Sidney, Fulke Greville, Judge Jeffreys and Charles Darwin. It could easily be argued that the important matter is not what Shrewsbury was or did in the days gone by, but what she is now and what her sons can do for England in the present hour of trial or in the hard years still to come. And yet this is only a half truth. The past must always hold, and rightly hold, its pride of place in any article on Public Schools, because their strength—as also, some would say, their weakness—lies in their glorious traditions, in their just pride of the past, in the iron rules of conduct handed down by the great worthies who have gone before. Superior and short-sighted people rise from time to time in fierce denunciation of what they call "the stupid slang." Why, for instance, should the new boy at Shrewsbury be taught to use the silly words "tweak," "cab," "hare" and "slay," while his brother at a school not fifty miles away must use, for the same meaning, those no less idiotic terms "swell," "crib," "sprint" and "spread"? They do not see that this convention is the mere outward sign of a thing spiritually deep. The new boy at Shrewsbury still finds many bigger surprises than a mere change of slang. He is confronted early with a curious election of various house officials—Hall Constable, Hall Scavenger, Hall Crier—and if elected to the last position, must stand upon a form, beginning his harangue: "Oyez, oyez, oyez! This is to give notice," and ending: "God Save the King and down with the Radicals"; he must study the art of "brewing" and learn what small boys ("new scum" was our pleasant term) may wear, as opposed to "tweaks" and "firsts"; he will find that his labours in form are rewarded, even if at big intervals, with graduated "merit money"; he will no doubt complain of the unjust conservatism by which half the school (and that the most punished half!) goes to its home at term end on a "Second Day," just as it did when stage-coaches could not carry the whole load on the first; and he will learn that poor old Milton

is utilised for "books" or "penals" (impositions long or short), even as I did twenty odd years back, and no doubt my grandfather before me, when he cut his name, *ære*



JACOBEAN SCREEN MOVED FROM OLD CHAPEL TO NEW.



OLD SCHOOL BUILDINGS: NOW PUBLIC LIBRARY.

*perennius*, astounding deep into a desk belonging to the Schools. . . .

This and much more he will have to learn, but all the while he will be learning, perhaps the better because he learns unconsciously, a bigger thing: that the oldest and the strongest custom of all is that by which the whole community condemns, with no uncertain voice and hand, any word or action which the old unwritten law proclaims not that of a Salopian and a gentleman, or, as the modern probably would say, not sporting.

True, Salopians have changed their home. The beautiful old buildings, guarded by stone effigies of Philomathes and Polymathes, still stand as memorial and bond with the past, a mile away; but they are cramped, with narrow grounds, and in the centre of a growing town. The move, in 1882, to a spacious, airy plateau towering above the River Severn and spread on every side to majestic views backed by Caradoc or Wrekin, will always stand as the great work of Henry Whitehead Moss. A large building, of the eighteenth century, already stood on the new site. This was adapted to make a school building for the actual form-rooms, and Sir Arthur Blomfield was called in to design a chapel and other immediate necessities. The later years of Mr. Moss's long reign were devoted to further adornment of the site, and on his retirement in 1908 the task was handed on to the Rev. A. C. Alington, the present Head.

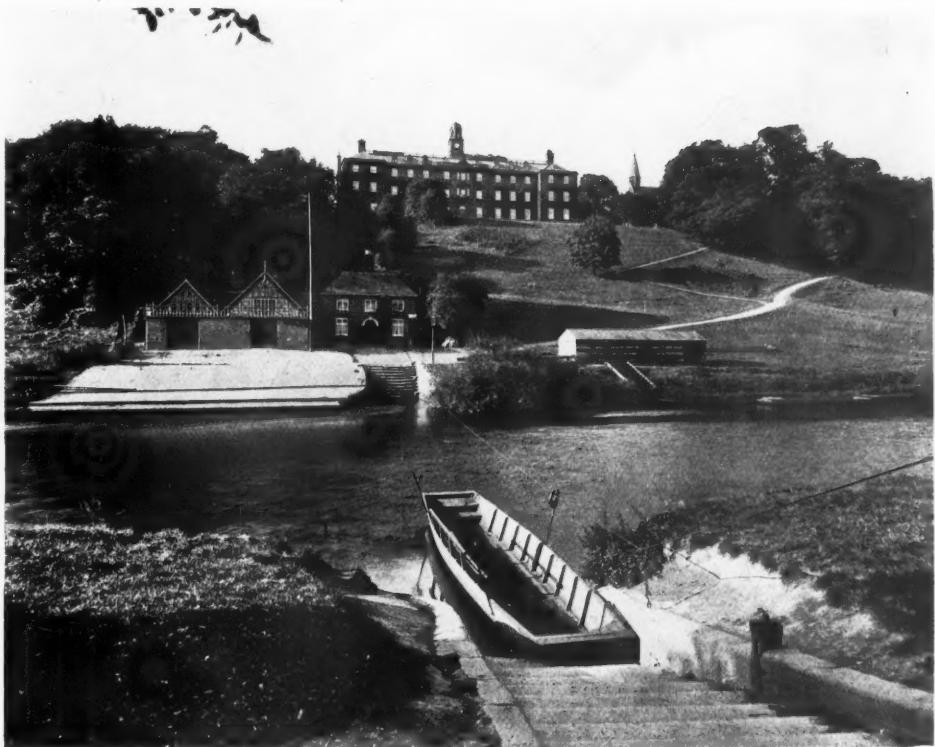
Shrewsbury has always been fortunate in her Head Masters; that great triumvirate, Butler, Kennedy and Moss, carried her history in one triumphant sweep from 1798 to 1908, and the latest holder of the title (who now leaves Shrewsbury for Eton's good) has not proved an exception. A fine organiser, a discreet reformer and a builder no less assiduous than Bess of Hardwick, he leaves Shrewsbury a bigger school than ever in its history before; a school fully equipped with every building that can possibly be needed by the most modern parent, but yet a school that remains, for pious Old Salopians, the same school in spirit and tradition as it was when they were happy boys beneath the shadow of its trees. Old Salopians of



SHREWSBURY: THE MAIN SCHOOL BUILDING.



SPEECH HALL.



THE SCHOOL FROM SEVERN FERRY.



THE NEW LIBRARY.

whatever generation will unite in wishing every good fortune to the new Head Master, Canon Sawyer.

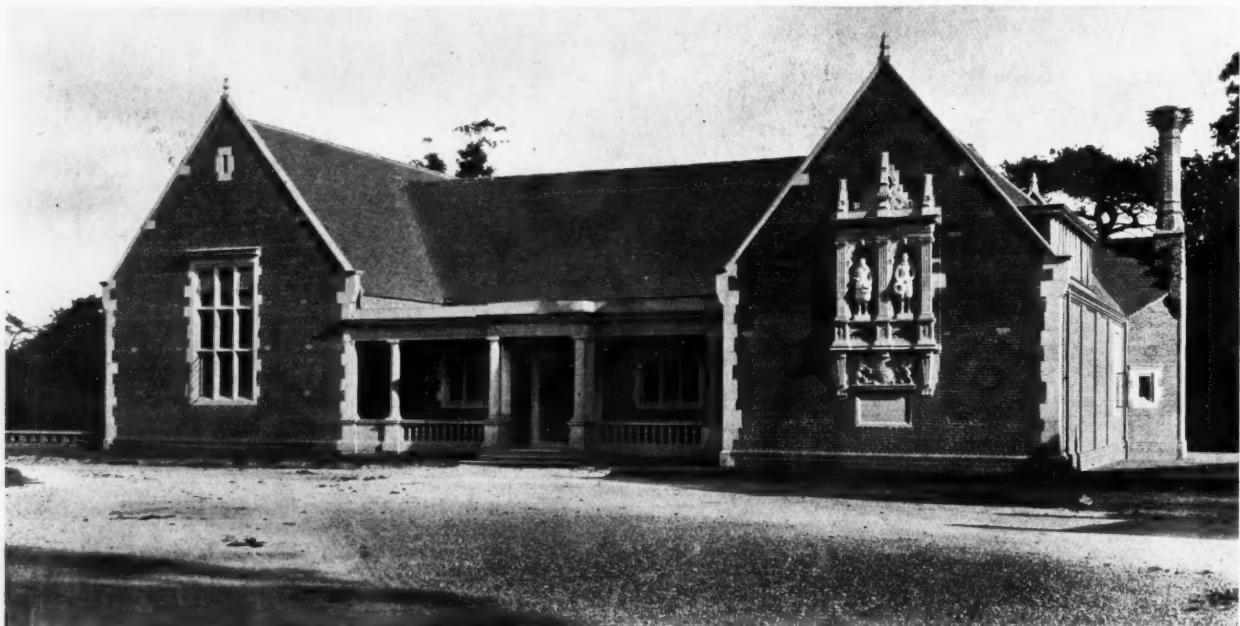
Those of us who had the mixed, yet not altogether unenviable experience of a long winter in the trenches can mostly, I expect, bear witness to the insistence with which, in periods of inaction, thoughts of the old days at school—the Public School—recurred; with what a leap of joy we ran, however rarely, across a fellow Old Boy; how happily we spent the time in memories and stories of the past. A sentimentalist would probably explain that in the desolation of the ruined villages or the discomfort of such muddy ditches as then formed our home we turned, rather than to a past painfully recent or a future somewhat doubtful, to the careless days of youth; the easy friendships; the happy sunlit hours upon the playing field; the slower passage of the minutes in a form-room; the welcome striking of the hour; the rush once more into the sunshine; the scurry into flannels; the thrill of the Bedford race, the Rossall or the Malvern match; above all, those anxious seconds that usher in the historic Bumping Race, or for more studious natures, peaceful hours of solitude snatched in their

famous library, amid the Caxtons and the other ancient treasures of the School;—a thousand memories of days when war and misery were things undreamt of and the world wagged very well. A cynic, if he knew the trenches during rain, might easily explain that the whole past is said to unroll itself before drowning men. . . . But the philosopher—being neither all cynic nor all sentimentalist, and remembering that, for the sensitive, unsporting boy, school often holds a misery that no later discomfort or misery ever can surpass—he knows differently. He knows that the Public School, with all its faults, is yet the best system ever invented for the training of boys to be men, because from its rich treasure of the past it bestows on even its humblest son a code, an ideal, a standard, to which his whole life must, if only as a duty to his school, attain.



READING-ROOM IN MOSER BUILDING.

When this freemasonry of Old Boys loses its inmemorial magic—and not until then—the Public School is doomed to make place for some more efficient method of technical instruction in the useful arts and crafts of life; and then,



SHREWSBURY SCHOOL: THE MOSER BUILDING.

*This, the latest addition to Shrewsbury School, houses the famous library, and includes museum and gallery for the water-colours presented by Mr. Moser. The feature in the right-hand gable contains two original Jacobean figures of schoolboys, etc. The building was designed by Mr. W. A. Forsyth.*

it is possible, an increase of efficiency may be counterbalanced by a loss of grit, rulership and honour.

Shrewsbury, like all her sisters, can boast of a good answer to the nation's call, and has to mourn some of her best sons. So far as can be traced at present, over 1,300 Salopians are serving and more than 100 have been killed—a fine record for a school that till recently was small. The total membership of the Old Salopian Club, including men of all ages, numbers less than 1,600.

Much in the next years has to be remoulded, much reformed. It is not to be expected that the Public Schools will escape, nor would one wish it to be so; but whatever criticism may be made of their method of imparting intelligence, foresight, organising power, not one word can be said against the manner in which they have developed the gifts of courage, leadership and practical resource. The rest lies with the future.

Shrewsbury—her great classical tradition leavened with sides for languages, Army and science; her ancient spirit fittingly enshrined in a new home upon one of the most lovely sites in England—can face what is to come with confidence; nor will any of her sons doubt but that, come what may, she is now in a stronger position than ever in her history and well prepared to play her part.

*Floreat Salopia!*

## LIFE IN THE TRENCHES

THE hour is 5 a.m. and the sun is shining brilliantly. Shells are whistling through the air and bursting with the usual "Crump." Overhead, however, is heard a very different sound, a sweet song reminding everyone of some spot in the Old Homeland. The sweet songster is a lark, and every man in the fire bay stops talking to listen. Everything is forgotten except the one fact that it is a lark, and the notes it is trilling out on the morning air are rendering "Home, Sweet Home" far more eloquently than any human voice could do. What scenes it conjures up; wide stretches of sandhills with a shimmering, scintillating sea and shining sands, a fresh breeze blowing and a feeling that life is worth living; among the hills where the plough is not in continuous use and the grass is not the lush type that grows in the low-lying pasture fields; these are only two of the numberless places in which almost every Briton has heard the lark at one time or another.

Eventually the songster drops down to earth and is lost to view, but the memory of those few minutes remained for some time afterwards.

Buzz, buzz, buzz. One instinctively raises the hand to brush away the flies which never seem to go to rest. All day long they pester and annoy, and at night, if a candle is alight in the dug-out, they are still as lively as ever. Why is it candles do not attract the fly as they do the moth?

There are all sorts, sizes and colours here. Some own to a brilliant viridian and others to a shiny blue black, while the humble house fly is greatly in evidence. Others there are which do not attack and annoy sleeping or waking men. I speak of the busy little flies one sees flying about among the wild flowers which now line the edges of many of our trenches. Black and gold is the dress of one, while others have red, brown or green bodies. Of course, the wasp is also to be found, and his friend the hornet, with his long yellow body with black tip, and lace-like, gauzy wings, is occasionally to be seen.

Beetles, too, are here in great variety, and an entomologist would find a happy hunting ground, as almost every time one looks on the floor of the trench a beetle of sorts is to be seen. Big, little and tiny, they crawl and run about. The floor acts as a trap, inasmuch as most of them fall from the greenery which fringes the top.

The largest met with is a big bronze one with strong mandibles and powerful legs, well adapted for running after and securing prey. It is about one and a half inches long, and running longitudinally down his elytra are lines which give his back a ridged appearance. This beetle is not at all difficult to capture, provided he is eating something, in which case he can be picked up. Upon one occasion I picked one up which was feeding on a small field mouse, and so great was his hold that it was almost impossible to tear the carcass away from it.

A smaller, prettier member of the beetle family is one which owns a brilliant emerald green livery, with a red body and legs. It, also, is a very fast runner, but is easily captured when on the floor. In the sunshine he glistens just like an emerald and has a habit of stopping motionless for a few minutes and then darting off a foot or so just like a streak of green light.

The devil's coach and horses is also to be found at times, and a most fearsome creature he looks. Should a stick or rifle butt be placed quite close to him he immediately puts himself into an attitude of defence, which is nearly always his undoing, as the rifle butt or boot is quickly dropped upon him.

Very often the click beetle will settle on the jacket, and great amusement is caused by placing it on its back and watching

it jump with a clicking noise a few inches into the air in order to regain its feet.

Ladybirds of two or three varieties are constantly flying round, and very pretty they look with their scarlet-vermilion coats and dark dots on them.

The slow moving oil beetle, too, is here, although not very common, while there are quite a large number of other species which are too numerous to mention.

What is that bird which is out in front a few yards only? It flies along a few yards and then seems to pull himself up suddenly, and with tail bent down at an angle and rapidly beating wings stops in one spot for a minute or two. A hawk hovers over ground which is continually being scarred by shell holes; however, it does not seem to worry him, for he keeps on hovering a minute or two and then flies on for a short distance and hovers again. Occasionally he swoops, and so swift is his descent that he seems to disappear into the air. In a short time, however, he is again to be seen in the same spot. These hawks seem to have a round, for they are continuously flying over the same ground at intervals.

About 4 p.m. a week or so ago a covey of partridges was flushed and flew away in a great state of consternation. Where they had come from and where they went it was impossible to discover, but the thoughts of all who saw them on the subject of where they would have liked them were unanimous. It can be expressed in the one word "Dixie."

Looking over the parapet one evening I saw seated on a strand of barbed wire six magpies, and they seemed to be carrying on a very animated conversation among themselves until someone inconsiderately fired a rifle. The conversation and chatter ceased, and one old wiseacre among them, pulling himself to his full height, gave what can only be described as a snort of derision. Fly away they did not, and in a second or so afterwards were as busy as ever chattering to themselves. This went on for a few minutes longer, but this happy meeting was inconsiderately broken up by a shell which burst close by. It was noticeable that the wiseacre flew away first with the remainder streaming after him. Apparently this shell must have upset the equilibrium of them all, for they never came again.

Happening to be passing along a rather damp spot one evening I was surprised to find, of all things, a toad. The trench had trapped him, too, for doubtless he had dropped in from overhead. His hunched up attitude and prominent eyes brought to mind pictures of many a stream, pond and riverside at home, especially in the gloaming, when they were croaking away as if their very life depended upon it. As this poor member of the family seemed to be in what must have been to him a veritable No Man's Land, I placed him in a temporarily safe position in return for the momentary pictures he had conjured up.

Stranger still was it to find a mole running down a trench in broad daylight. He seemed quite bewildered, and for fully three or four minutes wildly scrambled up and down the trench without making any effort to dig himself in. Eventually, after passing under a trench board several times, he came up and clumsily waddled along for about a yard, and then, apparently having had enough of the outside world and sunlight, he turned to the wall of the trench. No sooner did he reach it than he disappeared, and this in ground which was fairly hard. His sleek coat shone in the sunlight when he started to work, and it could easily be seen how powerful were his front legs with their hard, horny toes shaped like a small scoop. He disappeared from view in a second or so to more congenial surroundings.

Small field mice are also quite common, and in very many places a small heap of earth, looking just as if it had been riddled very fine, and oftener than not resting on some small protuberance from the side of the trench, betrays the activity of our small friend. Only occasionally is he to be seen at work, but once I had the pleasure of watching one for a few minutes. Happening to look down I spied two bright beady eyes set in a tiny body gradually coming out of a small hole. Seeing no enemy in sight, the little thing came out altogether and, turning sideways to his entrance, picked up something very daintily in his forepaws and started to nibble at it. He remained feeding until I unconsciously dislodged a little earth which tumbled down by his side. Like a flash he darted into his hole, but in a second or so he popped out his head, but not being quite satisfied with the outlook, retired and I saw him no more.

On the edges of the trenches grow numberless wild flowers. The wild cabbage makes a brave show with its brilliant yellow flowers arranged crosswise and its long pods growing in almost innumerable quantities. Several species of crane's-bill hang over the edges with their delicate pink blooms, and the scarlet pimpernel makes a brave show with its trailing stems and peculiarly shaped seed-pods. The daisy, of course, is to be seen in abundance in places, as also is the ragwort. The scarlet poppy in some places grows in profusion.

Lastly, there are the rats and mice. These are ubiquitous, everywhere one sees and hears them and, together with the flies, form the "curse" of the trenches. As soon as twilight starts to steal over the sky, so soon do these rodents commence operations, and their squeaks can be heard continually as they run about the parapet and parados.

The above-mentioned "life" is what I have actually seen and noticed. No doubt there are many other forms which a naturalist would notice. I simply give a list of what I have seen of "Life in the Trenches."

FLY ROD.



**A**PART from the late Gothic of the church and of the remnant of Grevel's house, the striking architectural features of the little Cotswold town of Chipping Campden belong to the reign of James I and are due to the magnificence and liberality of a Cheapside shopkeeper. This is true although his chief building is gone, a prey to the civil wars that broke out a few years after his death. From its remaining entrance (Fig. 6) and garden pavilions (Fig. 7) we judge how fine Campden House must have been and deplore the fate that overtook it in 1645. Fortunately, the almshouses (Fig. 1) and market hall (Fig. 3), which Campden also owes to Baptist Hicks, first Viscount Campden, still stand, and both grammar school and church possess tokens of his taste and generosity.

But this citizen of London occurs late in the annals of the town, which, as the first word of its name implies, was a trading place in Saxon days. Indeed, Camden, relying on a monkish chronicler, informs us in his "Britannia," that here "all the Kings of Saxon blood assembled in the yeare of Salvation 689 and consulted in common about

making war upon the Britons." Of such an event, however, there is no contemporary or early record, and all we know for certain is that it was a possession of King Harold that was granted to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, after William the Norman conquered the land. It was then chiefly agricultural and merely a local mart. But three centuries later the Cotswold fleece was famous and helped to feed the looms of France and Italy as well as those of the Low Countries. Thus Bigland, the Garter King, whose "Gloucestershire Collections" were published after his death in 1784, tells us of Campden :

The Æra of its most flourishing State, was the 14th Century; when it became a most crowded Mart for Wool and the Residence of the most opulent Merchants, who exported it to *Flanders*, then the Seat of the Manufacture of Cloth, for the general Supply of *Europe*. By these many capacious Dwelling Houses were erected, of which we may judge by one only now remaining.

He refers to the house traditionally known as William Grevel's of which a portion with a beautiful two-storeyed oriel still stands (Fig. 4). The Latin inscription on the fine brass in the church, which commemorates Grevel and



his wife, Mariota, calls him the flower of the wool staplers of the whole of England and records his death in 1401. He belonged to a Campden family of humble origin. In Edward I's time Simon Gruell and Thomas Grivel were both tenants of the manor, paying 8d. and 4d. respectively for their "half burgage." But under Richard II William rose to affluence, lending 300 marks to that King, and buying at first messuages in Campden, but later on the Manor of Milcote which passed to his son, John. The family prospered. Marriage with the heiress of the second Lord Willoughby

but under Queen Elizabeth it was restored to unity by Thomas Smyth who, as a young man, had been in favour with Henry VIII and whose armoured effigy lies on a canopied tomb in the church with his two wives and thirteen children kneeling in the panels below. He died in 1593 and was succeeded by his son Anthony, who was owner in 1605 when James I granted a new charter to the town which is described as "a very ancient and populous borough." Although its wool merchants were no more, yet every country town trade was well represented, and there were



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2.—INTERIOR OF THE MARKET HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

de Brooke made Fulke Greville, a courtier poet, one of Warwickshire's largest landowners. He obtained the barony of Brooke and a grant of Warwick Castle in 1604. There his descendants still dwell, the Warwick Earldom having been bestowed on them in 1759.

While the descendant of Campden's great wool stapler was establishing himself at Warwick Castle the manor and town of Chipping Campden passed to a new lord, who, as we have seen, largely altered its aspect. The manor had changed hands many times since Hugh the Wolf had held it. In William Grevel's days it was divided among heiresses,

nine tailors and five butchers three years later when Anthony Smyth, still dubbed lord of the manor, was parting with the whole estate, and the Hicks régime began.

John Hicks of Tortworth in Gloucestershire had a son, Robert, who went to London and became a wealthy mercer in Cheapside. He was able to send his eldest son to Trinity College, Cambridge, and there place him in the household of William Cecil. When that statesman became Lord Burghley and Elizabeth's Treasurer, Michael Hicks was one of his chief secretaries, a knight, and an important Gloucestershire landowner. He also aided his younger



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3.—THE MARKET HALL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

brother, Baptist, who had succeeded to the Cheapside business and, at Sir Michael's recommendation, became one of the chief purveyors of silks and mercery to the Court. When James succeeded Elizabeth he knighted this leading citizen, who was now a banker as well as a mercer, and who, like his brother, sought estates in the county from which he had sprung. 1609 is the year when the purchase of the whole of the Smyth property in Campden was completed. Four years later the almshouses were built and endowed, while the market hall, which appears to have cost only £90, bears Baptist Hicks' arms and the date 1627. In the following May he became Viscount Campden, an honour he only enjoyed for a year before he was laid to rest in the south chapel of the church where he lies even more sumptuously entombed than his predecessor, Thomas Smyth.

It was on the sloping ground south of the church that he housed himself, and not only the house but the gardens were among the most elaborate and interesting of an age which gave us Hatfield and Bramshill, Audley End and Blickling. Even Bigland, living at a time when the extreme classicalism of the Adam style prevailed,



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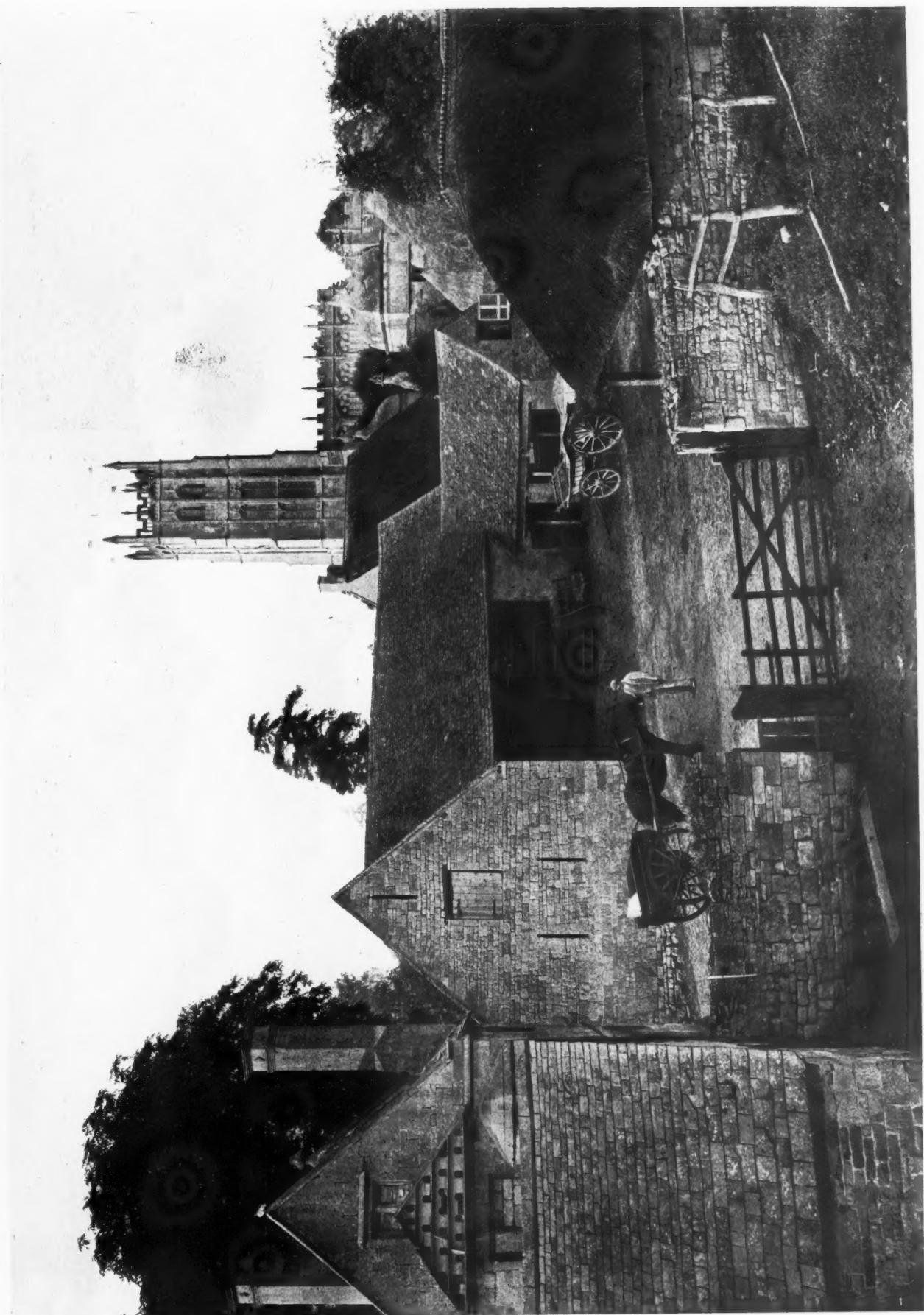
4.—GREVEL'S HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

has much praise for Campden House.

From an accurate Plan and Elevation still extant, it appears to have been an Edifice in the boldest Style of that Day. It consisted of four Fronts, the principal towards the Garden, upon the grand Terras: at each Angle was a lateral Projection of some Feet, with spacious Bow Windows; in the Centre a Portico with a series of Columns of the five orders (as in the Schools at *Oxford*), and an open Corridore. The Parapet was finished, with Pediments of a capricious Taste; and the Chimneys were twisted Pillars with Corinthian Capitals. A very capacious Dome issued from the Roof, which was regularly illuminated for the Direction of Travellers during the Night. This immense Building was enriched with Friezes and Entablatures most profusely sculptured; it is reported to have been erected at the Expense of 29000*l* and to have occupied, with its Offices a Site of eight Acres. Part of a Wall, discoloured by Fire, and the two Banqueting Houses which terminated the Terras, are the Remains most worthy Notice, of this magnificent Pile.

Whether the "Plan and Elevation" mentioned by Bigland was one drawn when the house still stood cannot with certainty be said. Probably he meant a tinted drawing by one William Hughes which found its way into the King's Library and thus to the British Museum, but which, from the dress of the figures, cannot be earlier than some three-quarters of a century after the house was



5.—CHURCH AND LODGES FROM THE FARMYARD.

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6.—THE LODGES OF OLD CAMPDEN HOUSE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

burnt down. Bigland, however, in a note mentions that there were representations of the place "in the possession of Lord Gainsborough, the Rev. Mr. Weston and other Curies." Mr. Weston was the vicar, and his may have been the Bird's

Eye View now preserved in Campden. It has no figures, but the accuracy of the Jacobean architecture and the absence of any later work in a group that includes not only the house, offices and gardens, but also the church, vicarage, almshouses and other buildings, make it possible that it dates before 1645, or anyhow is a faithful copy of an original. The "Columns of the five orders as in the Schools at Oxford," imply a central tower as at Stoneyhurst. That we do not find depicted, but only three tiers of columns supporting a curved pediment. Above this is seen the "capacious Dome," really an octagonal cupola with balloon-shaped roof such as came to England from the Low Countries as early as Henry VIII's time. Whether this rose from the roof or was the top of a tower on the north side cannot be judged from the view, which gives a flat south elevation without perspective. A lantern in the top storey, which had eight glazed casements, would produce the traditional light which directed all wayfarers.

The main entrance from the road was against the churchyard, and there yet remain the two lodges with cupola-shaped roofs in wrought stone flanking the entrance, which was of the width of "the outward court." In the centre is a pedimented archway, and between this and the lodges rise curiously shaped gables topped with openwork finials that are really chimneys (Fig. 7). The outward was separated from the inward court by a screen in the middle of which rose a gated archway. East of the court lay the court garden, and to the west were two curtilages, named respectively the "henn yard" and the "bleach garden"—the latter testifying to a home linen-weaving industry conducted by the female members of the numerous household. Between these two curtilages rose the laundry. This remains, for the view gives an exact representation of the little building with stone mullioned windows, gable finial and stately chimney shafts, which appears on the extreme left of Fig. 5. The farmery is more recent, and is grafted on to the outer walls of the old bleach garden.

The south side of the house opened on to "the terrass walk," and a little fire-scorched fragment of it yet remains.



7.—THE EASTERN BANQUETING HOUSE AT TERRACE LEVEL.

Walls extended beyond the front of the house to the ends of the terrace, where stood "banqueting houses," which have been preserved and give a vivid idea of the extent and richness of the whole architectural composition. The fall of the ground between the terrace and the "great garden" allowed of an undercroft opening on to the latter, and there was another floor under this, as seen in the illustration of the western building (Fig. 8). The upper floors, level with the terrace, contained each a hall with noble portal and arcaded windows (Fig. 7), which were, unfortunately, blocked up when these stately pleasure houses were put to base uses. The great garden, reached from the terrace by three flights of steps, was arranged in *parterres*, and was enclosed by walls which, on the south side, rose up at intervals in curved and finialled gables, and below and beyond them lay "the great orchard," bounded by a stream whose windings were straightened out into "the long canal." East of the garden were situate the coach-house and stables. The latter building had two tiers of mullioned and transomed windows, and in the view occupies very much the site of what is now known as the Court House, and which tradition holds was occupied occasionally by the dowager Viscountess, being probably the stables transformed into a habitation by her after the fire, which was the last act in the short drama of Baptist Hicks' mansion.

Failing a son Baptist Hicks, long before he became a peer, decided to make his elder daughter's husband his successor. In 1605 Juliana Hicks married Edward Noel, son of a prominent landowner in the Shires of Leicester and Rutland. He received a baronetcy in 1611 and a barony six years later.



8.—THE WESTERN BANQUETING HOUSE FROM THE LOWER GROUND.



9.—THE LODGES FROM THE CHURCHYARD.

When the Campden Viscountcy was created in 1628 the patent was drawn so as to devolve on him by special remainder, and he accordingly succeeded his father-in-law in his title and Gloucestershire estates. On the outbreak of the Civil War he was commissioned by Charles I to raise regiments of horse and foot, but in 1643 he died in the King's quarters at Oxford, and his son, Baptist, succeeded him. He was a brigadier in the Royal army, and in 1644 and 1645 we find him at the head of his men raiding about Stamford and Peterboro', and then for a while a prisoner in London. Bigland, therefore, is not quite correct in saying that Campden House "was destroyed by Fire during the Civil Wars by the Command of Baptist Lord Noel." His mother, who did not die till she reached the age of ninety-five in 1680, retained a life interest in Campden House and estates, and computed her loss of chattels when the house was burnt at £15,000.

When the year 1645 opened we find it occupied by a Royal garrison under Sir Harry Bard, who reports himself as "taking great pains with spades, shovels and mattocks." The letter in which he states this was intercepted, and on January 15th the Parliamentary Committee in London wrote as follows to Colonel Massie, who held Gloucester for them :

We are informed by some letters intercepted that the King's forces are about to fortify Campden. If they should perfect that work it will be of very ill consequence in many respects, and especially (as it is designed) to cut off all intercourse between you and Warwick. We therefore think it necessary that the enemy be removed from hence by all means, and so recommend it to you to be done with all possible speed.

Massie, however, was not in a position to effect this "removal." He is in a "sad condition" at Gloucester and must act on the defensive, and the Warwick garrison is in like case. Bard remained unmolested, and was in occupation when in May the Royal army marched up. Charles and Rupert left Oxford on May 7th for the campaign which was to end disastrously at Naseby. On their way north they drew out the garrisons in order to swell their force. On the evacuation of Campden House the enemy would not neglect to enter a place which for months they had coveted. It had been proved of importance as a military post, and Rupert appears to have himself ordered its destruction. The blame, however, has been put on the shoulders of Bard, who does not appear to have been a friend of Clarendon who thus describes the incident :

His Majesty reached Evesham, and on his way drew out the garrison of Campden House, which had brought no other benefit to the public than the enriching the licentious governor thereof, who exercised an unbounded tyranny over the whole country, and took his leave of it by wantonly burning the noble pile which he had too long inhabited.

Although Lord Campden had to pay £9,000 composition in 1647 to regain possession of his estates, he remained a rich man. But neither his mother nor himself made any attempt to rebuild the great house that had come to him from his maternal grandfather. His heart was in Rutland where he not only possessed his paternal grandfather's estates, but also Exton which had come to him from the Harringtons through his grandmother. There he died in 1682, and whereas his father, mother and other members of his family lie in the Hicks' chapel in Campden, it is at Exton that he is entombed under a monument for which Horace Walpole tells us that Grinling Gibbons charged a thousand pounds. His son became Earl of Gainsborough and his descendants in the female line still hold the title and estates. Above the town, on a Cotswold spur overlooking a chine, the ancient grange of Old Combe has been rebuilt as the present Campden House, but Exton remains the chief seat of the family.

Chipping Campden lies sufficiently far from its station to have escaped an outburst of showy brick villas, such as afflict neighbouring Broadway. There is scarce a note of modernity. It is a typical Cotswold town of the past, decayed, indeed, as regards trade, but architecturally delightful. Its halcyon mediaeval days are brought vividly before us by the fifteenth century elements of its little town hall, by its noble church, where lie William Grevel "flos mercatorum lanar' totius Angliae" and other noted wool staplers lie buried, by Grevel's house of which the Gothic oriel remains in happy conjunction with renovations of the time when Baptist Hicks gave the full Jacobean flavour which the place so agreeably retains. In his time it was still "a mercat towne well peopled and of good resort," and therefore the ample arcaded structure—its massive oak wagon roof (Fig. 2) covered with stone tiles—which he raised up above the street level was at first a busy place of sale for cheese, butter, poultry and other products of neighbouring farms. But when, in the latter half of the eighteenth century, Bigland made his notes, "the Merchandise and Manufactures of Early Days were totally lost." Yet it is not without pleasant eighteenth century features giving the right feeling of continuity of inhabitation without derogation to its architectural amenity. A recent attempt to uphold its best traditions and yet give it renewed industrial life was made by Mr. Ashbee when it became the centre of a Guild of Handicraft. It certainly affords an admirable setting for hand wrought production on old lines, and it is to be hoped that, though not continued on the intended scale, the scheme will leave its impress on the life and aspect of this Cotswold gem.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

## IN THE GARDEN

### HARDY FLOWERS OF AUTUMN.

THE notes by Miss Jekyll in the last issue, together with the illustrations of the delightful flower borders at Munstead Wood, show that with care in choosing suitable plants the flower borders may be quite as beautiful in autumn as in any other season. Tender flowers, so much used in the old bedding-out days, come to grief with the first frost in September. Happily, those tender plants have to a great extent been replaced by hardy flowers of noble stature that produce fine colour effects well into the autumn. Apart from shrubby plants like Roses, of which the Teas, Chinas and Hybrid Teas flower in November, or Heaths that flower all the year round, shrubby Veronicas or hardy Fuchsias, there is a wealth of bloom among herbaceous plants. Michaelmas Daisies or perennial Aster in shades of blue, mauve and pink take the lead in autumn flowers, and their quiet colouring is in perfect harmony with the tints of autumn foliage. The grouping of the foam white Aster paniculatus with Clematis Flammula, so cleverly accomplished at Munstead Wood, should be noted by others who garden for autumn effect. The manner of staking the tall-growing plants should also be observed. They are not tied in the middle like sheaves of wheat, but staked lightly with unobtrusive Hazel twigs that allow the graceful development of each plant; while in the case of Clematis Flammula the flowering shoots are trained over slanting pea-sticks down to the front close to the path, where it joins a mass of pink Sedum spectabile, all flowering together. Of Michaelmas Daisies there is no end, and it is difficult to make a choice; but a selection

might well include tall-growing varieties like *A. Novi-Belgii niveus*, a free-flowering white variety rising over 6ft. in height; *A. Mewhyst*, with large, open, blue flowers a little later than Feltham Blue, which is its counterpart in flower; *Lil Fardell*, the prettiest of the rose-coloured Michaelmas Daisies; and *Beauty of Colwall*, a grand double variety with mauve blue flowers. Among the lower-growing varieties *A. acris* and its variety *linifolium* make bold masses of colour, while the Italian Starwort, *A. Amellus* and its varieties, together with *A. ericoides* and *A. Thompsoni*, are worthy of special attention. The Italian Starwort, *Aster Amellus bessarabicus*, is grown in the woodland at Kew with charming effect, scattered here and there in drifts under the partial shade of trees, like the China Asters in the illustration on the next page.

Returning to the autumn borders, no garden, either large or small, should be without Japanese Windflowers in pink and white. There are numerous varieties, but three of the best are Whirlwind, white; cristata, with crested foliage; and hupehensis, a rare form and perhaps the most lovely of all; the flowers are of varying shades of pink. Then there are plants of the Sage family, like *Salvias* and *Nepetas*, which, by the way, always flower better in poor soils than in those that are rich; in fact, I am inclined to the opinion that over-manuring is one of the commonest mistakes in the flower garden and a frequent cause of disease. *Salvia nemorosa* is an old-fashioned flower seen at its best in autumn, and the Silver Sage (*Perovskia atriplicifolia*), although past its flowering, remains very beautiful all through the winter by virtue of its silvery grey foliage borne

on half-shrubby shoots. That delightful Love-in-a-Mist which bears Miss Jekyll's name is now, after severe frosts, flowering beautifully from seed sown about Midsummer Day. Drifts of autumn Crocuses usually put in an appearance during St. Luke's Summer, although the summer sometimes fails us, as in the present year. The pale blue *Crocus speciosus* and the pure white form are two of the best, thriving and spreading on lawns or grassy banks and in the rock garden. The blue Spider-wort, *Commelinæ coelestis*, flowers in autumn. An old-fashioned flower, but comparatively little known, it delights in a warm border and a light soil, but it is advisable to protect its fleshy roots with a covering of ashes on the approach of frost. So far the flowers referred to are mainly in shades of blue and pink, but we must not forget the warm colours of the Sunflower family, the *Silphiums*, *Heleniums* and *Rudbeckias*, likewise the many-coloured Chrysanthemums that I see now

sufficiently. After that, little need be done. If coarse weeds appear, they should be pulled up, especially as the flowering season approaches; but, as a rule, these newly bared places are not troublesome weedy the first season.

If, in places, seed has fallen so thickly that the plants choke each other, a rough thinning may be done. Should labour be scarce, a judicious chopping out with a hoe will suffice. Six inches to nine inches apart is perhaps the ideal distribution, if the welfare of the individual plant were the chief consideration; but the best effect is made when the plants are growing unevenly. The outlines, too, of the area sown should be broken and irregular. Should the soil be poor, manure may be dug in before the sowing, for these plants like generous conditions at the root.

The colours of the plants on the plot illustrated were purple, blue, mauve and pink in various depths of shade, also white.



E. J. Wallis.

CHINA ASTERS IN THE WOODLAND AT KEW.

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in mid-November flowering in great profusion under the walls and palings in many cottage gardens. H. C.

#### THE CHINA ASTER IN WOODLAND.

THE accompanying illustration shows a method of obtaining an autumnal display of blossom in the wilder or semi-wooded part of the garden, which is at once very effective and beautiful as well as easily and cheaply produced. It is made by sowing the common single or China Aster (*Callistephus sinensis*) broadcast. In the course of the winter's work bare patches of ground are frequently made by the removal of shrubberies, felling of old trees and such like operations; such places may, for one season at least, very well be treated in this way instead of being at once sown down with grass.

The piece of ground here illustrated was last winter denuded of its turf for the purpose of repairing worn places on more frequented lawns and avenues. When this work was finished, the ground was dug deeply over and the surface levelled and "fined" down. About the middle of April it was sown with the Aster seed. A dry day with little or no wind is desirable for the sowing, so that the seed may fall fairly evenly over the ground. A light raking will cover it in

A packet of mixed seed may be bought for a few pence, and, once obtained, an abundant supply can be home saved. The photograph was taken in early October. W. J. B.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### SURREY AS AN ORCHID COUNTY.

SIR,—Chancing to pick up the issue of COUNTRY LIFE for August 5th my attention was arrested by a letter from a correspondent who claimed to have picked some 300 odd blooms of the bee orchis and sent a box full of the same to you, "many with the roots on." I marvel that there can still be some who commit actions of this kind, and I much approved of your condemnatory remarks. As a keen amateur botanist I have always been interested in the habits and habitat of our wild orchids, many of which are now becoming extremely scarce, and it would be interesting to know if any of your readers can record similar discoveries to the one I made one sunny day in early June this year. Myself and two friends were tramping somewhere in Surrey in search of floral treasures when we stumbled across a woody dell, part chalk, part earth, well hidden by tall clumps of deadly nightshade. Briefly let me state what that dell yielded in the way of wild orchids: Fragrant orchis, man orchis, lesser butterfly orchis, bird's-nest orchis, fly orchis, twayblade, spotted orchis and narrow-leaved helleborine. I believe Kent is known as the orchid county of England. Can any Kentish reader beat this? Eight different specimens in an area of perhaps 100 square yards. Needless to say, I did not pluck up any roots, but contented myself with a single bloom of each variety. My brother, visiting the spot in July, found the bee orchis within five minutes' walk of the dell. While on the subject

of the bee orchis, I m'ght mention that it was very plentiful this year within four miles of the suburban town of Sutton, and I very much doubt if it can be found in any place nearer London.—L. GILBERT PAYNE.

A SIMPLE WAY OF FORCING RHUBARB.

SIR,—In that part of the country near where I live nearly all the labourers have a few apple trees, and if they have not they can by purchase or barter get as many as they like from the various orchards close to them. This year there is an extraordinary lack of apples. When meat is as dear as it is, pudding forms a big item in the labourer's dinner, and the cottager sets great store on his apple dumplings and tarts. This year, when most needed, they are unattainable, and the housewife has had little chance of making jam. It has been suggested that it would be a good thing if these labourers could be taught a simple way of forcing rhubarb. I remember in a part of Yorkshire where I once lived the cottagers had a way of doing this, but I do not know the method they used. Could you not give some instructions for forcing rhubarb that would be applicable to those who have neither hot-house, greenhouse, nor even pits and frames at their disposal?—Y. G.

[The suggestion is excellent and worthy of every encouragement. It is true that apples are very scarce now, but the scarcity will be even greater in the spring, and there is nothing like rhubarb to take their place. Fortunately, the forcing of rhubarb is a simple process, and in the absence of the cottager it may easily be carried out by his wife. Commence by preparing a small border with a southern aspect, if possible under the protection of a wall or hedge or close to a fence. The roots may be lifted any time after the leaves die down, and it is customary, though not essential, to leave the roots exposed in the open to a slight frost or two before placing them in their forcing quarters. Strong roots, either two or three years old, are preferred. After planting, cover the roots with boxes, such as large sugar boxes, apple barrels, or large chimney pots; in fact, anything that will cover the roots and that has sufficient headroom. The boxes or barrels should have the ends knocked out and the better end preserved intact and used as a lid

for covering purposes; it can then be adjusted for inspecting the crop. The boxes are next surrounded by leaves and long stable manure, and being thus imbedded in warm litter the roots soon start into action. If stable manure is used without leaves, there is danger of the heat being generated too freely. It is usual to partially surround the boxes with litter, but the whole box can, if necessary, be covered with litter to hasten the growth of the crop.—ED.]

WOOD ASHES AS POTATO MANURE.

SIR,—There were, and probably are still, quite a number of cottage gardeners in the Midlands who were most ardent growers of the potato, and considered that a good dressing of wood and vegetable ashes with other muck on the rows was the best way of producing a good crop in suitable soil. Some of the garden patches were of considerable size, running to even an acre in extent. These patches were for the most part set with potatoes, but there were sections reserved for the cabbage kind of vegetable. It was the custom in the fall to make up a burnt rubbish heap on which all refuse was burnt as it was collected off the land, and in addition the children were set to gather sticks out of the lanes from ditches and hedges, from the woods fallen branches and other fallings, which were carried to the burning heaps in the garden patches, which were thus kept alight right to the end of November. When the burning was over the heap was covered with roadside sods and the whole banked with soil with the object of keeping it intact until setting time came round, when the potatoes were set with a proportion of the vegetable and wood ashes. The results were never anything but satisfactory, and I have seen some wonderful diggings of clean, healthy tubers which were the grower's pride. None of the cottagers knew anything of the merits of potash nor even the name, but they knew by long experience the value of such ashes as "muck in a garden." Some of them added a thin sprinkling of lime to the potato rows as the setting went on. In many ways the old cottagers were wise in their generation, and out of their garden plots could almost provide for a family, as well as feed up a couple or more good pigs for butcher or family use.—THOMAS RATCLIFFE.

## “NOVEMBER'S LEAF”



JEWELS OF THE HEDGEROW.

ONE often wonders how many townsfolk appreciate the great beauty of the winter countryside. To me there is always at this time an added freshness after the faded glories of the late autumn, and nowhere is this more noticeable than in the country immediately about London. I wish I could convey to anyone who has not felt it the exhilaration of a bright November morning with a strong north-easter blowing the leaves along in clouds and filling the cart tracks and hollows with a golden stream.

Over the stile and along the green path one sees through the pleasant hedge with its brilliant hips—their fine scarlet intensified by the blue sky beyond—a rabble of rooks and jackdaws digging in the soft pasture, throwing up bits of turf. What wicked old rascals they are! Each one ready to pilfer from his neighbour or slyly sidling up to give him a surreptitious peck.

I once had a jackdaw which used to play off this trick upon an old fox-terrier with which he had sworn a lifelong friendship.

The two would sit side by side all the day long; the dog, lost in abstraction, gazing into the distance in search of imaginary cats. When Jack, the humorist, considered the terrier sufficiently hypnotised by this process, he would creep up and give him a dig in the ribs—a primitive joke, if you like, but surely quite as good as some human clowning. Rooks often seem to evince a great interest in the business of the highway, and I have often felt myself to be a centre of interest to some old purple specimen in the oak-tops before he flew off with an acorn.

A distant shot, and my rooks and jackdaws fly off; a pheasant cries, and another answers from an adjoining plantation. “Whirr, whirr!” Up gets a cock bird and goes sailing off down the slope, showing all the



ENJOYING AN AUTUMN-TINTED PLAIN LEAF.



SUNNING HIMSELF IN HIS FINE BROWN COAT.

beauty of his rounded wings and graceful, sweeping tail. It is at this season that he looks his best in the woods, his rich reds, browns and golds harmonising with the dead and dying leaves.

Rounded wings always appeal to me strongly. What is finer than the shape of the male plover's pinion? Of all the birds of the countryside, I believe I love plovers best. Their cry is so plaintive, and the beautiful large soft eye with the dark splash from the corner gives almost the suggestion of tears. A few fields further on there are hundreds of these lovely little birds, all facing up wind. Their bronze-green backs touched with all the colours of tempered steel

gleam out on this brilliant morning, their white breasts faintly flushed with the pink of the warm sunshine. It is entrancing to watch them through the field-glasses. Some are standing pensively, while others rest with head turned and bill under wing, poised on one slender leg, veering round like little weathercocks with every gust of wind: some toddle about with mincing steps, or stoop stiffly with high-tilted tail to secure some scrap of food. Here and there only heads can be seen above the hollows, with their quaint crests

waving in the wind. Then one rises and soon the whole flock is wheeling round and round crying weirdly, ever changing; sometimes showing black sometimes white; and every now and then lost against the background of wood, until they all alight together upon the dark soil, each lovely wing raised high above the back, as if to stretch it before it is folded away. I could watch the plover all day, but there is another of my favourites in sight—an old heron circling over the river.

I should fine heavily everyone who killed a heron. It is remarkable that this splendid but shy bird should be so frequently seen in and about London. May its number

never be lessened! What a grand and dignified bird he is in flight, with his slow, dreamy strokes and down-pointed wings: as an ornithologist recently said to me, "as though he were flying in his sleep." But to-day the gale blows so strongly that this old bird is carried swiftly down wind—a glimpse of blue-grey, and he is out of sight.

A kingfisher flashes by (this little beauty would seem

to be on the increase around London, thanks to careful protection), and a water-rat swims across in his stately fashion, leaving behind his wide silvery wake, and lands on the other bank. I have made one or two hasty notes of him enjoying a large yellow-brown plane leaf.

His coat is a fine rich brown, like that of his cousin, the musk rat; but, for all that, he is rather a plebeian person.

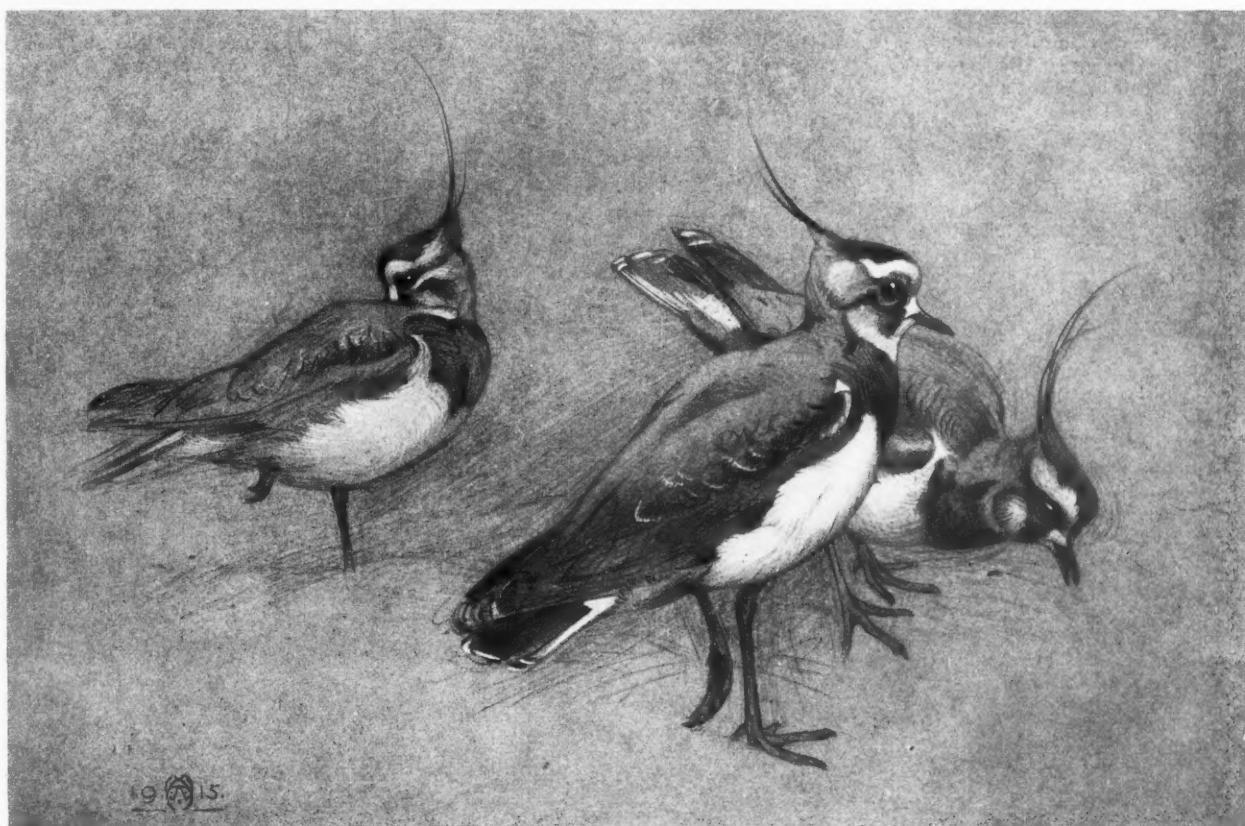
Further up stream are a dozen or so of mallard resting on the water; the drakes resplendent with their emerald heads and glossy chestnut breasts. Winding in and all about them a lively little moorhen, swimming jerkily, is searching for succulent weeds in that curiously self-absorbed manner he has. The white lining of his tilted tail and the stripes on his blue-grey sides flash out on the dark water.



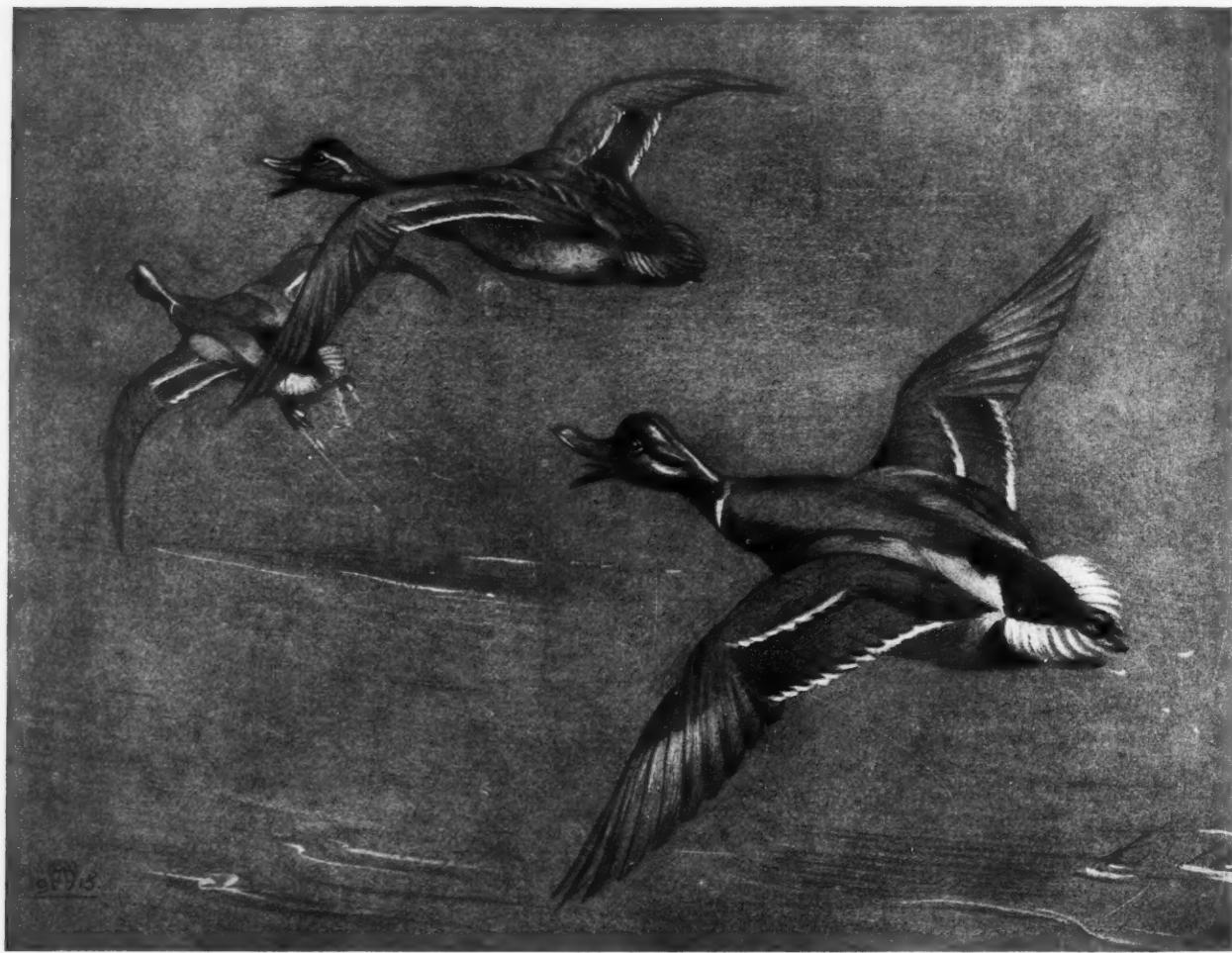
A BASKING PEEWIT POISED ON ONE SLENDER LEG.



ALIGHTING, WITH ROUNDED WINGS UPLIFTED.



AT HOME ON THE WINTRY FALLOW.



THE MALLARD TAKE A LOOK ROUND.

His red forehead vies with the scarlet of the rose berries.

Up get three of the nearest mallard, soon joined by the whole lot flying high in a wide circle. In the wood to the left a Formosan pheasant runs furtively through the green undergrowth, head and back showing only. He has heard the sound of guns and shouts of approaching beaters. I hope he may escape and join his lady who is crouching on the further bank among the dry, yellow bents. Sport has no charm for me. I love the birds too greatly.

A dear old brown spaniel walks proudly by with a young duck in its mouth.

One loves the cheerful reds in this winter landscape. The most brilliant of them all, the translucent berries of the water-elder in the sunlight; the pleasing little spindle-tree, whose bright pink seed-vessels look at a distance more like a florescence of springtime; and the bold red of our handsomest fungus, the white-spotted fly agaric, greeting one from under the brown bracken.

On the homeward way a magnificent old oak stands near the path—no sign of life among its branches save for a tiny acrobat suspended from a twig at the extremity



"YOU COULDN'T DO THIS."

of one of its mighty arms. How could green, yellow and blue be more perfectly harmonised than in this tiny bit of fluffiness—a blue tit?

It may be unfair to say so, but birds always seem to me to have much more personality than animals. There is something almost human in their dainty antics of courtship, while all the year round they go about their little businesses with such an air of cheery courage and gaiety you cannot help but love them. "Moje" has no place in the avine vocabulary. A dull bird is a sick bird, and in a state of nature that generally means a dying bird. Scoffers may argue that a creature which lives chiefly by preying on lesser creatures is compelled to "look lively"; but undoubtedly a good deal of play enters into the hunting; and surely the widely spread habit of mimicry has some humour in it. The blue tit, however, is not given to mimicry. Upside down or right way up, twisting and turning among the branches like a merry-andrew, he is his own inimitable self, and never happier nor more sprite-like than when his azure crown glints among bare wintry branches.

WINIFRED AUSTIN.

## LITERATURE

## A BOOK OF THE WEEK

**Imperial Germany**, by Prince von Bülow. New and Revised Edition. (Cassell.)

**A**GREAT many things are to be learned by us in England from the book which Prince Bülow wrote in 1913 and revised in May, 1916. It cannot be accepted as a perfectly frank document. True, the author is a gentleman. He does not condescend to the repetition of the stale untruths by which writers of less authority try to prove the righteousness of Germany. To a great extent this volume is a definition of the line of defence which he judges to be most plausible. Not much controversial skill would be sufficient to pierce its weak places. For instance, the frequent references to Bismarck as though dead still the leader and spokesman of the Fatherland comes with an ill grace from the previous Minister and favourite of the young Emperor who callously dropped the old and tried pilot of the Fatherland. It is admitted in terms of praise that Bismarck organised three wars in succession for the purpose of consolidating the German States into a German Empire, yet his friend and pupil in one breath claims to be following in his footsteps, and in another desires it to be understood that Germany's aim was always peaceful. She prepared huge armies, stores of ammunition, guns, even reserves of food, and built a great navy for the sake of peace only! Some of his countrymen avowed less noble motives, but they are chidden for their imprudent admissions. Prince Bülow is carelessly illogical. For the first time in history England and Germany are at war, and he tries to throw the blame on the former while unconsciously drawing a picture which tells quite a different story. During the years that followed the war of 1870 he paints a Germany busy with trade and commerce, yet equally so with the drill sergeant, consolidating its power, jealous of slights, envious of other countries ever preparing for the day of battle. His language is not so plain-spoken, but no impartial reader will question the verity of our interpretation. England at the same time, with what he calls her haughtiness and pride, was following out a policy of "splendid isolation," leaving Continental countries to settle their own quarrels, John Bull ever holding that it is the first duty of a nation as of an individual to mind its own business. Prince Bülow confesses that Germany encouraged her in this, lulled her to sleep till the Fleet was built. He cannot conceal his surprise that Britain did not seek a quarrel while the German Fleet was still in its infancy and wipe out a growing danger. That would have been the German way. He is very far from underestimating her as an enemy. Writing before the confidence of Germany in ultimate victory was shaken by the resolution of British strength on the Somme, he says:

Once embarked upon a war, England has always ruthlessly devoted all means at her disposal to its prosecution. English policy was always guided by what Gambetta called "*la souveraineté du but*." England can only be got at by employing like decision and determination. The English character being what it is, since in the course of the world's history we are now for the first time at war with England, our future depends upon our employing all our means and all our forces with equal ruthlessness, so as to secure the victory and obtain a clear road.

His account of the German Fleet's origin is most interesting. Bismarck's retirement had brought over Germany a cloud of "anxious and distrustful" feeling, and the only way to arouse public feeling was by harping on the string of nationalism.

The great oppression which had weighed on the spirit of the nation since the rupture between the wearer of the Imperial crown and the mighty man who had brought it up from the depths of Kyffhäuser, could not be lifted unless the German Emperor could set before his people, who at that time were not united either by common hopes or demands, a new goal towards which to strive, and could indicate to them "a place in the sun" to which they had a right, and which they must try to attain. On the other hand, patriotic feeling must not be roused to such an extent as to damage irreparably our relations with England, against whom our defensive power at sea would for years still be insufficient, and at whose mercy we lay in 1897, as a competent judge said at the time, like so much butter before the knife.

Leaving the rest of the argument to politicians, we must say a few words about the effective exhortation on increased productivity of the soil which the ex-Chancellor addressed to his countrymen. He quotes with triumph the admission made by Lord Selborne that if Germany had not organised her agriculture as well as the army was

organised, the war would have been comparatively short. But the men round the Kaiser had foreseen that if war was made with England, the first essential was that Germany should be able to feed herself. Her success may be judged from the fact that whereas in 1900 Germany imported 16 per cent. of the grain needed for bread, in 1906 this had fallen to 10 per cent. The most vulnerable point in Great Britain is that we are dependent on imports for about 60 per cent. of our food products.

**The Making of a Gunner**, by "F. O. O." (Nash, 3s 6d.)

THIS new book by the author of "With the Guns" will be heartily welcomed by all readers of his former work. "F. O. O." possesses a clear, straightforward and easy style, lightened by a considerable vein of humour, and is based on a solid rock-bottom bed of knowledge. A sentence out of the preface will show the writer's objects. "The work of the Artillery," he says, "has lately attained a special prominence in the public mind, owing to the part that it took in the events that led up to the great offensive on the Ancre during the last week in June, 1916, but the details of this work are too often shrouded in mystery." The author certainly outlines admirably the working of the new artillery system that is the result of the present great war, for he belongs to the Royal Garrison Artillery, and dwells with righteous pride on the marvels of the new organisation which, for that branch of the Service alone, out of many others, provided the necessary personnel that has acquitted itself with such perfection during the recent great advance. Dwelling on the importance of the R.G.A., he explains that it has to man every howitzer and gun heavier than field pieces, with the exception of a very few manned by the Royal Marine Artillery, and also all the anti-aircraft guns, both at home and abroad, the Mounted Artillery, and a large proportion of trench howitzers and mortars. And all this over and above their original function of manning our coast defences throughout the world. In a masterly chapter entitled "The Development of the Gunner" he describes how, after the earlier experiences of the war, the Garrison Artillery transformed itself from the most supine unit in the British Army into possibly the most important. He closely follows the progress of a typical battery from its raw state on formation at the dépôt till it becomes a fully trained unit; then he takes us with it to the front and paints a vivid picture of it in action. This is extremely well done, but, as already indicated, the author has other gifts than that of clear description, and some of the sketches of personalities with which the serious part of the narrative is interspersed are among the best things in an excellent book.

**The Wonderful Year**, by William J. Locke. (John Lane, 6s.)

MR. LOCKE'S new book is delightful. The scene is chiefly in France with a short diversion to Egypt. Martin Overshaw is a young Englishman who has been teaching French under sordid conditions; Corinna Hastings is an English girl and an art student without artistic capacity; they meet in Paris, and are despatched together on bicycles to the South of France; they are not lovers at starting, and juxtaposition fails to kindle any spark. They were sent on this journey by the Marchand de Bonheur, a great creature, like Stevenson's Prince Florizel, and just as able and willing to control the destinies of his fellow-creatures, male or female. Three weeks on their bicycles bring the pair to Brantôme, where truffles are dug out of the ground and *pâté de foie gras* is the main industry. Bigourdin, landlord of the hotel at which they stay, is an admirable portrait of a fine type of Frenchman—"a vast man" and not highly educated, but very intelligent and with the heart of a chivalrous gentleman. The whole picture of French provincial life is most interesting and attractive. Two other women are of importance in the story—Féline, a daughter of the Marchand de Bonheur and niece of Bigourdin, and Lucilla Merriton, a rich American girl who strays up and down Europe and plays Lady Bountiful where she is inclined. Thus there are two marriageable men, Martin and Bigourdin, and three very suitable young women, and the story shows how they got sorted in the end; of course, one girl had to be left out, but no hearts were permanently broken. But, before any marriages took place, the war came, and both the men fought for France; and both suffered, but neither was killed nor so mutilated as to make marriage out of the question. While thanking Mr. Locke heartily for his book, we should like to ask him one question: Did both these pairs live on at Brantôme and spend the whole of their subsequent lives in running the hotel and making *pâté de foie gras*? One can hardly fancy it. Mr. Locke's French is everywhere good, and there is no unnecessary display of it.

**Jeremy's Love Story**, by B. Y. Benedall. (Mills and Boon, 6s.)

JEREMY was a young artist whose particular talent lay in ornamenting furniture with designs worked in every unlikely substance from feathers to sea-shells, and the description of his quaint craft is almost enough in itself to make his love story interesting. Having proposed, moved by his gratitude, affection and the expectation of his family, to the daughter of his father's second wife—the relationship does not sound nice, but the "Table of Kindred and Affinity" has nothing to say against it—Jeremy goes back to his rooms in town to find a new lodger sitting on her trunk in the room opposite to his own and, as all experienced readers will expect, he promptly falls in love with her. Ella Britta with her sweet, childlike trust in the "dear God," the tenderest, gayest, dearest little heroine fiction has given us for many a day, something between a fairy and an angel, yet with a steadfast woman's heart with which to love and suffer, and though her circumstances include the fact that she is hiding from her family and has a baby boy out at nurse, we were ready at once to share Jeremy's faith in her essential purity, though it would be unfair to the author to indicate here how it is justified. We might cavil at little things, for instance, Florence Anne's reference

to the "pig-pail" which regulations as to the keeping of swine have surely banished from a London child's conception of *meubles*, but it would be ungracious in the case of a book in which there is so much real beauty and inspiration, of which perhaps this sentence may give some inkling: "The agony of losing is not all agony when that which has been once gained is so fine it has left an intangible benefit, too strongly to be merely earth, too divine to be transient."

**Through the Serbian Campaign**, by Gordon Gordon-Smith.  
(Hutchinson, 12s. 6d.)

MR. GORDON-SMITH gives us an interesting history of the gallantry and hardships of the Serbians in their campaign against overwhelming odds, and relates in detail the events which led to the great European war. But the most important and perhaps the most interesting portion of the book

is that devoted to the methods by which the Germans succeeded in breaking up the Balkan League against the Turks, by sowing dissension and by working on the cupidity and ambitious nature of Bulgaria. The author lays particular stress on the extraordinary way the Allies were deceived with regard to Bulgaria's intentions, notwithstanding the fact that the Serbian Government impressed upon them the fact that Bulgaria was their enemy; while M. Coromilos, the Greek Minister to the Quirinal, and M. Venizelos equally expressed their confident knowledge of how that nation would act, and prophesied that erring diplomacy would lead to catastrophe. The bombardment of Belgrade was the beginning of the fulfilment of that prophecy, and in token of the consistency of their methods the Germans fired over eighty shells at the American hospital. A preface by M. S. Boshkovich, formerly Serbian Minister to the Court of St. James's, adds interest to the book, which is well written and well illustrated.

## CORRESPONDENCE

"SORROW THAT SORROW GROWS LESS."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The lines, "I shall remember while the light lasts, and in the darkness I shall not forget," are by Swinburne, but I am not sure in which poem they occur. There is also another quotation of his I am fond of: "Thou hast forgotten oh! summer swallow, But the world shall end e'er I forget."—C. J. ASHER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The quotation you want is, I think, "I shall remember while the light lives yet, And in the darkness I shall not forget." I fancy they are Swinburne's—perhaps from "Tristan"—but am not sure of this. I only remember them by their music.—H. GREENHOUGH SMITH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The quotation, "I shall remember while the light lives yet, And in the night-time I shall not forget," is from the poem "Erosion," page 150 of first series of Poems and Ballads by Swinburne.—J. C.-C.

THE LAND AND THE PEOPLE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There was very much in your last issue to interest anyone who knows anything about the value of land at this very critical time in our history, and perhaps the more critical time that awaits us when millions of men will be cast upon the labour market. I was a little surprised when the County Councils were asked by the Development Commission to give them at least some idea what cultivable land was wasted in their various districts. Only one replied. We are so disgracefully behind in the cultivation of our land compared with other countries that it struck me whether they were not a little ashamed. When I turn to see, for instance, what Germany gets from her land, how she is enabled to stand this long siege, I ask myself what sort of plight we should have been in but for our fleets. We have to learn many lessons personally disagreeable; in this matter we have a national disagreeable lesson to learn. This nation that has proved itself corrupt through and through has taught us a practical lesson what to do with our land.

I have tried to understand a little about the land for many years, and the more my little stock of knowledge has increased the more important it seems to me. We need some land reformers who will show what is best to be done with the land. I am afraid Mr. Middleton's address to the farmers will not help us much, neither will the talk about large and small allotments. We know now by experience how they work. Man learns by doing the wrong thing how to do the right. A few exceptional men under exceptional circumstances may get a fair living on a small holding; but it is not true that what can be done by a few can be done by the many. Anyhow, it is not proved to me that we have thousands of acres of land close to our towns, and especially in new districts. Mr. Fell says there are always about 14,000 acres in the area of London—a statement incredible; only the vast area of this wasted land is well known. It is very remarkable what a lot of this waste land there is. People buy this land and seem to say by their actions, "It's mine, and it's my pleasure it should be covered with rank, nauseous weeds, whose seed shall blow for miles on to cultivated land." We are, as a people, fearfully wasteful. I believe if we are ever going to do anything with our land we must begin at the bottom. There is this land come-at-able to thousands of workmen who are obliged to live in the towns.—JOHN TINSLEY.

SLATES ON GLASTONBURY TITHE BARN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A few years ago you published in COUNTRY LIFE a most interesting account of tithe barns, with illustrations, one of which was the barn here, which used to belong to the abbots of Glastonbury. It is a beautiful specimen, with the roof of Spanish chestnut made like the beams of a ship, and pegged together. The outside is of thatch, which is in very bad condition, and three weeks ago I was horrified to hear that it was to be roofed with blue slates, as, through the war, thatching had become so costly. I live close by, and the house I rent was the abbot's summer palace and is part of the same estate, but the owner does not care one bit for its beauty and old associations. I at once wrote to ask the agents (Messrs. Wainwright of Shepton Mallet) if they would give me time to try and save the barn from such a fate as a slate roof, which would also destroy the interior, and they agreed to wait a short time before beginning to patch it. But immediate repairs are needed, so I found a thatcher and got some reed and, as far as I know, he has begun to do what will make it watertight. I had to guarantee £50, which I hope to collect among friends, but the whole cost required is at least £120, and so I need a backing up and public interest aroused. As I presume you do value these old treasures, and having already discovered this one, I hope you will help us if you can.—E. O. HARPER.

MEN—OR HORSES?

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was surprised to read a report of an appeal by Sir Hedworth Meux to retain a man on his stud farm. The chairman expressed an opinion that Sir Hedworth should reduce his stud for the present. Surely this is a sad policy to advocate, and to try to cut down the stud of a man anxious to keep it going now is lamentable. Plenty of breeders have given up, as it is, and every encouragement should be given to those willing to continue. This should be a case for the Board of Agriculture to consider. Another serious and difficult question to be faced is the demobilisation of horses when the war is over. If great care is not taken there must be a serious flooding of the markets at home, and further injury to breeders. It is to be hoped that all horses brought home from abroad will be most carefully selected, and no moderate animals brought back to this country.—W.

THE DRUMMING OF WOODPECKERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was much interested in Mr. Wilkinson's charmingly illustrated article on the greater spotted woodpecker in your issue of the 4th inst. The "drumming" of these birds has always interested me, and nearly twenty years ago I had the good fortune to watch this woodpecker frequently while engaged in producing this curious sound. An eminent ornithologist (then an old man) was very envious when I described what I had seen, and after saying he had often tried but had never succeeded in watching the operation, he urged me to send my notes to the *Zoologist*, as he considered there was so much uncertainty as to the method by which this sound was produced and the reason for its use that my record would prove a valuable one. These notes appeared in that publication (1900, page 278, and 1901, page 95) and show that this "drumming" was used as a call by the male bird to its mate, and was responded to by the appearance of the female bird in a very short time. I never saw the female do this, but am unable to say she does not. One particular bough of a fir tree was used so frequently and proved such a wonderful sounding board that I was satisfied it was chosen for this very reason in preference to others which were also used on two occasions recorded. The bough was dead, and anyone can prove with little trouble how hard this wood is and how resonant when devoid of sap. The bird never perched on the bough, but was always on the trunk when I observed it. As the plantation adjoined my garden I had exceptional opportunities of observation, and I found that year after year the sound ceased when nesting was completed, which confirmed my view that it was a call note. I should like to be sure that our three woodpeckers adopt this habit, as I am in some doubt about the green one doing so. Woodpeckers undoubtedly tap trees to test their suitability for nesting purposes, but for this there is no "drumming," and I very much doubt if they "drum" for insects. Perhaps some of your readers can throw more light upon this curious habit from personal observation. I shall be pleased to lend my notes to your contributor Mr. Wilkinson or to any other interested readers, or possibly permission to reproduce them in your paper could be obtained if you think it worth while.—OLIVER H. NEW.

PERISCOPE FOR GUNNERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have to-day registered this fund under the War Charities Act, 1916, as I hope to be enabled to carry on the work. Thanks to the generosity of the subscribers, a very large number of periscopes and stereo-telescopes have been sent to each of our fronts. These instruments are of high magnifying power. The fund, amounting to over £4,300, is exhausted, but I still continue to receive an enormous number of letters from generals and other officers at the front showing how greatly these powerful instruments have been appreciated, and impressing upon me the imperative necessity for a continued increase in the supply. It should not be forgotten that those already sent are constantly being destroyed or damaged, and this inevitable wastage must be made good. The demand grows. The supply will, I am sure, be made equal to the demand by the help of those who are waiting and watching at home. Officers at the front are not content with bearing the burden and heat of the day out there, but insist on sending me subscriptions from the trenches by way of expressing their appreciation of the good work of the fund and of the practical value of the instruments. I shall be grateful if your readers will send, and will interest their friends to send, donations, however small, to me, addressed "Judge Tobin, K.C., care of London City and Midland Bank, Leyland's Branch, 36, Castle Street, Liverpool." I will personally acknowledge them. I have requested that these valuable glasses should, if practicable, be returned to me at the end of the war. I hope it may thus prove possible to realise a fund in aid of military charities. Not a single penny has been absorbed in any expenses other than the cost of postages, and printing lists of subscribers and balance sheets.—ALFRED A. TOBIN.

## THE SPORTING SPIRIT.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I enclose a picture of some wounded Tommies who greatly enjoyed a meet of the Hertfordshire Foxhounds at Ashridge—the seat of Earl Brownlow—last Saturday. The Earl of Cavan, who is Master of this Hunt, now commands a brigade of Guards somewhere in France.—J. E. NEWMAN.

## THE DUKE OF CHANDOS AND CAVENDISH SQUARE.

[TO THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—I have read with great interest your article on Canons Park. It says that the Duke endeavoured to buy up all the land between Canons and London in order to form a drive on his own property direct from London. I have often heard that the two beautiful stone houses in the middle of the north side of Cavendish Square were built by the Duke of Chandos as entrance lodges to this drive. Is this correct, or is it only a myth?—P. W.

[The writer of the article on Canons makes the following note: "Not only is this story a myth, but it is difficult to see how it gained currency. The Duke had the idea of building a great Chandos House north of Cavendish Square. This involved projecting wing blocks, now represented, in a very imperfect fashion, by the houses in the north-east and north-west corners of the Square. The main block was to have been a good deal north of them. After the scheme was abandoned, John James of Greenwich, a very able architect, designed the two admirable houses in the Square which now flank the blind alley between them. The other houses on the north side were filled in afterwards. In any case the James houses are incredible as lodges, because they would have blocked the noble forecourt schemed for Chandos House, and the opening between them only measures about twenty-five feet in width. The design of the houses has also been attributed to Edward Sheppard. The story crops up continually in topographical books of the popular sort, but is wholly mythical."—ED.]

## WASPS.

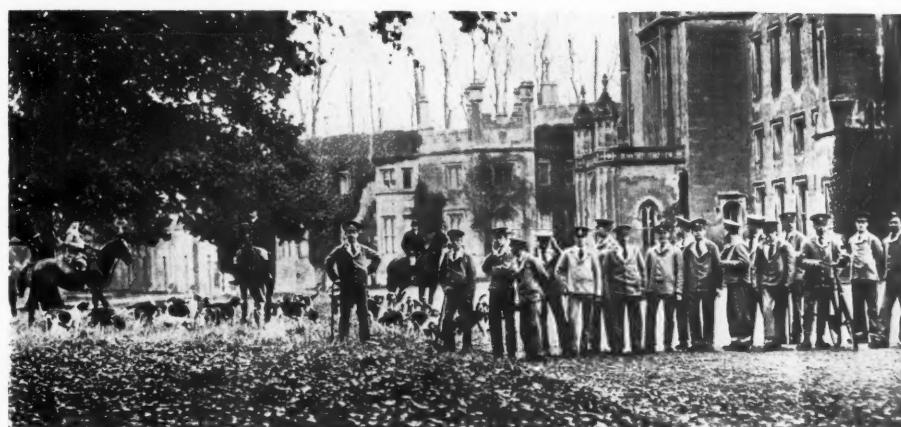
[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In reference to Sir Herbert Maxwell's letter on wasps, our experience in the Vale of Clwyd was similar to his in the south-west of Scotland. I never remember seeing anything like the number of queen wasps about as there were this spring. I killed over 150 myself and many hundreds escaped, and we contemplated a bad time in the late autumn, but I only saw one solitary wasp, and that was dead. Without wishing to throw the slightest doubt on Sir Herbert Maxwell's explanation, does he think it is possible that wasps could be infected with the Isle of Wight disease which has been so disastrous to beekeepers all over the country?—F. L. R., Rhyl, North Wales.

## A WASP'S METHODS OF WARFARE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just read Lord Wynford's letter in COUNTRY LIFE, issue November 4th, about a wasp catching and plucking a fly. I have seen them do the same thing on my window-seat, and having pulled off the legs, wings and head, the wasp sat down and appeared to suck the body of the fly dry, for it left the skin intact. I have often watched unsuccessful chases. The fly seems to realise that his life is in danger and dashes about the room in a great fright.—MARY BOURDILLON.



WOUNDED SOLDIERS AT A MEET OF THE HERTFORDSHIRE FOXHOUNDS.

## CLEVER FISHING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was recently taking a week-end respite from munitions flogging, and witnessed an event which I think is not of frequent occurrence, and of which I enclose a photograph. The fish is a pike of the respectable proportions of 45in. length from snout to tail, 20½in. girth, and just over 23lb. weight. The angler, Mr. Lafone, was fishing for perch, having had such good sport the previous week that he decided to try to repeat it on this occasion, in addition to testing a different type of bait. The rod was a very light 6ft. perch rod, which he is seen holding. To land such a fish with such a rod is a no mean achievement, and I thought you would be interested in seeing it.—J. W. GILDERSLEVE.



A 23LB. PIKE CAUGHT ON A PERCH ROD.



WHEN THE HONEY-BIRD HAS BETRAYED THE BEES.

SIR,—A hunter of big game in Central Africa tells us of the great boon a find of honey is in these wild districts. There are various kinds of bees, but the best honey is made by the large brown bees similar to our British domesticated ones. Our traveller tells us that practically always the honey-bird alone leads to the hidden stores of the bee. He is a pretty fellow (*Moroc indicator*), about the size of a starling, and his favourite food is honey. He cannot get it, however, unassisted. The wild bee is very careful of its stores, which are generally hidden in a hollow trunk or fork of a tree. Every crevice the bees have carefully sealed against all marauders, a tiny hole, and often several inches of passage, allows ingress and egress to the bees alone, and is far too small for even a bird to penetrate. The honey-bird, by smell, sight, and other signs, discovers the delicious stores. He cannot get at it, but there are others he knows who can help him, for they, too, love honey—certain beasts, but, best of all, man. He attracts the notice of the traveller by his shrill continuous cry, "Chirr, chirr," and much fluttering of wings as he flies from tree to tree leading the way. Then becomes stationary, with extra urgent voice. The hum of bees is heard, and the spoil is quickly climbed for by a black boy well versed in the art. A fire below, and an axe above, a few stings, and a valuable addition to the commissariat is secured for many days to come. We are told of the combs of honey frequently being several feet long. A fair share of honey is always left for the honey-bird.—MARTIA.

## A HARD WINTER.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—The notion that a good big crop of hips, haws, holly and ivy fruit is Nature's provision for birds against a hard winter is not now so much believed in as it was years ago; but I have never heard anyone dispute the theory that a poor mast year is a sign of a mild winter. In the latter I have some faith, and am the more inclined to it because there is a poor crop of sweet chestnut, beech mast and acorns, all of which will be a disappointment to many country folk, whose young people particularly love to roast their chestnuts by the fire at Christmas and appreciate the delight of a pan of beech mast shelled after roasting in a side oven; while others will miss the full rounded acorn which, when dried and reduced to powder, is considered the best remedy for diarrhoea in both children and many animals. According to many of our wisest wiseheads, the lack of mast is due to sun shortage and is a sign of a mild and short winter. This is a matter which is worth investigation.—THOMAS RATCLIFFE.

## A SOLDIER PIGEON FANCIER.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—There must be many pigeon fanciers among our gallant troops, and to these particularly this photograph will appeal. It shows a soldier home wounded from France renewing acquaintance with his feathered friends.—HAMISH MUIR.

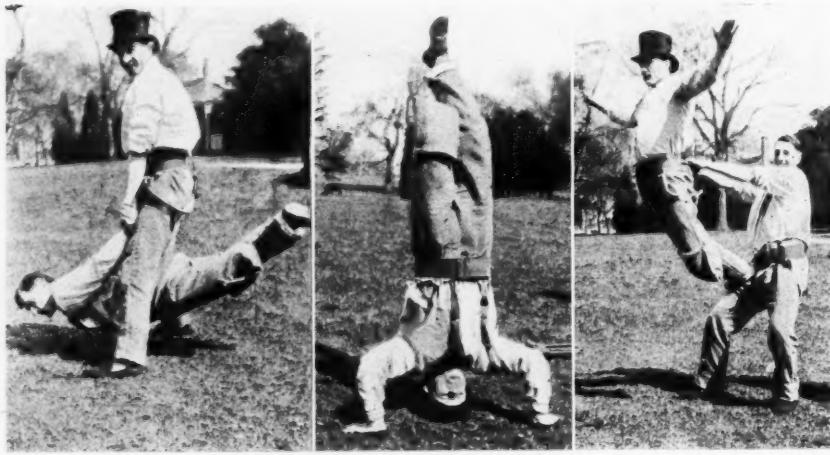


A FRIENDLY GREETING.

ing-room. After two years he brought two other younger squirrels, and led them over the house. Shortly afterwards he disappeared, to the regret of the whole neighbourhood. The two new squirrels remained, and last week we had just fed them as usual, when we saw a third coming slowly and feebly across the lawn towards us. With difficulty he clambered on to the window seat, into the room and on to the writing table where he had been the old friend of former days. Old and pitifully helpless, he did not attempt to eat the nuts on the table, but sat on the edge as near to us as he could, and looked appealingly at us, asking for help. We fed him on bread and crushed nuts, and he is already stronger and better. He seems thankful to be at home again, and is tamer than ever, allowing us to stroke him while he eats. Possibly some of your readers who understand squirrels will kindly tell us if he is unusually old and wise.—ELLINOR C. L. CLOSE.

SIR.—May I describe what seems to us to be a striking instance of memory and intelligence on the part of a squirrel which came from the woods and made friends with my sister, Miss Maud Mainwaring, in Cheshire, some eight years ago? He became extremely tame and seldom failed to come daily for dinner and tea, which he usually ate on my sister's writing table in the draw-

ing-room.



KEEPING HIS SPIRITS UP.

## THE GIBRALTAR MONKEYS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—Perhaps the enclosed snapshot of the famous Gibraltar monkeys may interest you. One is of a mother nursing her baby, and the other shows rather a clear profile of the leader of the tribe. While taking these photographs the old mother was so interested in the camera that she tried to take it from me when trying to get a snap-shot of her face.—R. F. MEREDITH.

[Unfortunately the photograph of the female was not suitable for reproduction.—ED.]

## SKELETONISED LEAVES.

[To the Editor.]

SIR.—My mother's friend was an adept in this art. In her workroom she had plates with the different leaves saturated in rainwater, which she deftly patted with clever, patient fingers until free of vegetable matter. Then immersing the leaves, etc., in a solution of chloride of lime, they became like lace of driven snow.

With slender wire, wrapped round with white floss silk, these were grouped together in a bouquet and put under a glass shade. The African gooseberry she favoured, which seemed to my impatient, youthful spirit an utter impossibility. If memory holds good, a group of the above had an honoured position in the Exhibition of 1863 in London.—A GREAT ADMIRER OF "COUNTRY LIFE" IN GLASGOW.



LEADER OF THE TRIBE.

## [To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—In reply to your correspondent's inquiry concerning skeletonising leaves, it is perfectly possible to get rid of the soft matter artificially and leave the whole perfect skeleton uninjured. It is too late in the year now to find a single perfect leaf; early summer is the time, when the leaves are fully formed and insects have not had time to attack them. I take an old saucepan and put a good number of perfect leaves into water (soft by preference) and soap (say, a quart of water and pieces of soap amounting to the size of three or four walnuts). Stand the saucepan on the kitchen stove, and let it boil gently; visiting it occasionally to make good the waste of water and to see how the leaves are getting on. Some kinds take days to cook, others will be ready in an hour or two. When sufficiently cooked they will be soft, and either the skin will form a bag with the skeleton and fleshy part within, in which case the skin will peel off and the flesh will wash away if held gently under a tap, or skin and all will rub off between the finger and thumb. To avoid injuring the skeleton, I found it good to lay the leaf out, before removing the skin, on a perfectly smooth thin piece of wood. Remove the skin, wash away the green part, then carefully turn it over and treat the other side the same. When well washed, lay on a sheet of paper, or cloth, to dry. Very beautiful bunches may be made with a variety of leaves and some seed vessels if artistically mounted under a glass shade, especially if bleached with chloride of lime. There are, or were thirty years ago, two magnificent groups in the Museum in Kew Gardens. Ivy leaves, apples, pears, St. John's Wort skeletonise very well. If your correspondent really tries to do these leaves, and will take the pains, I shall be very pleased to give her (or him) any further help, or put her up to several "dodges" which experience induced me to adopt. At present I must not trespass further on your space.—M. E. M.

## DIVERSIONS OF A ONE-LEGGED MAN.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—I think your readers may be interested in the photograph I send as illustrating the extraordinary nerve and high spirits of a soldier at the Convalescent Hospital provided by the Hon. Mrs. Wilbraham Cooper at Hatchlands, Surrey. The man prided himself with justice on his agility and his "acrobatic turns," as he called them, which are surely a triumph of mind over matter. The top hat is of some antiquity, and for the last two years has been requisitioned whenever there was a "certain liveliness" among the patients.—C. H.